## The Fall of Jericho

In this book, the Arabic writer and historian, Fadhil Al-Rubaiee, argues that The Sons of Israel did not cross River Jordan and Joshua (Jehoshua bin Nun) did not conquer Palestinian Jericho. The Torah did not know of Madaba, which many archeologists claim that it was mentioned as "Medab". It is certain that King David did not enter Jerusalem or the mountainous fortress of Bayt Boos in the vicinity of Damascus. Al-Rubaiee also argues that Palestine had not known in its ancient history a mountain called Ariha (Mount Jericho), as described by the Torah. As for the mountain that has the name of Sihyoun, it is a recent name that was invented by the settlers a few years ago.

Al-Rubaiee also argues that the orientalists have created for us a history that is rife with insoluble contradictions. We know, for example, that David and Solomon were ancient Yemeni kings; how have they become Palestinian? We also know that Jericho is at the lowest point below sea level; how does the Torah claim that it is a rugged mountain? We also know from the Torah that Qadas is a mountain; how is it claimed to be the Arab city of al-Quds, which is neither a mountain, nor over a mountain, nor near one.

The creation of the story of crossing River Jordan and conquering Jericho, followed by an imagined battle, called Har Majiddo, had made a victim out of us and a hero out of the other. In fact, these events had not taken place in Palestine, and this particular battle had existed neither in the historical records nor in the oral narratives. It did not take place in Palestine at any time in recorded history and Joshua (Yahusha‘ bin Nun) had never committed a massacre against the Palestinians, simply because he had not known Palestine and there had been no group of people called Palestinians where he had lived.

The Hebrew language was the great tool for founding the unity of these European settlers. Naturally, this was not sufficient. A unifying narrative for a collective sentiment was necessary for a common old history that would link the Jews of all nationalities to a new cultural, ultra-national race called the Sons of Israel, without knowing that this was nothing but the name of a tribe

The term of the Hebrews, according to historical scientific standards, refers to many groups of people, not to one only, whereas the term of the Sons of Israel refers to a specific tribe. Any confusion in this will necessarily lead to faulty consequences, similar to the consequences reached by the orientalist research works.





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THE FALL OF JERICHO - WHO INVENTED THIS HISTORY?

Fadhil Al-Rubaiee

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# THE FALL OF JERICHO &

## THE MYTH OF CROSSING THE RIVER JORDAN

## WHO INVENTED THIS HISTORY?

Fadhil Al-Rubaiee

# The Myth of Crossing the River Jordan and the Fall of Jericho Who had Invented this History?



Translated by

Bassam S. Abu-Ghazlah

The myth of crossing the river Jordan and the fall of Jericho
Who had invented this history?

**Fadhil Al-Rubaiee**
Translated by Bassam S. Abu Ghazalah

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## Gratitude

Presenting this book in its English translation, the author is honored to express his gratitude to his friend Mr. Ammar and Asmaa for their generous contribution to have it translated into English and Hebrew and published in both languages. It is a source of great pleasure for me that people of their status willingly and generously contribute in spreading knowledge with no personal reason except their feeling of responsibility.

I am also grateful to my friend Bassam S. Abu-Ghazalah for his professional translation.

# Inhoudsopgave


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This work was translated from the following book in Arabic::

**فاضل الربيعي**

**أسطورة عبور الأردن**

**وسقوط أريحا**

**من اخترع هذا التاريخ؟**

**بيروت: جداول للنشر والترجمة والتوزيع، 2014**

## An Executive Résumé

The Sons of Israel did not cross the River Jordan and Joshua (Jehoshua bin Nun) did not conquer Palestinian Jericho. The Torah did not know of Madaba, which many archeologists claim that it was mentioned as "Medab". It is certain that King David did not enter Jerusalem or the mountainous fortress of Bayt Boos in the vicinity of Damascus, because this mountainous fortress is not located in Syria; besides, there are no lingual or archeological remains that tell about it. Nevertheless, David, according to the Torah's narrative, had indeed taken this great fortress, albeit in a different geography. It is there today standing lofty near Sanaa, still bearing its ancient name Bayt Boos. By a generous invitation extended to me by the Yemeni previous Minister of Defense Lieutenant General Abd al-Malek al-Sayyani, a highly educated gentleman who had carefully read my books and believed that they had revealed the actual historical facts, I was able to follow on my feet the steps of the Yemeni King David in the mountains and valleys that had been described by the Torah. There, I saw the same names with no phonetic change or modification. When I climbed the heights towards this invincible mountainous fortress and read its old name, Bayt Boos, I was assured of the existence of a historical and a geographic fraud. It is astonishing that, in its description of the battles, the Torah confirms that David had captured the mountain and fortress of *Sihyoun* (Zion) that he had given his name: Mount Dud (דוד). Both Bayt Boos and Mount Dud are in the heart of a mountainous height that extends from Sa‘dah until the east of Sanaa. The common people, however, call Mount Dud with the indicative article "al": Jabal al-Dud,

wrongly thinking that it is related to the ground worms. [*dud* in Arabic means worms.] Who, then, had counterfeited history? How could these mountains and fortresses, with their same names and geographic description, be in Yemen, while at the same time they are claimed to be in Palestine and that Joshua had crossed the Jordan towards Jericho?[1]

It is certain that Palestine had not known in its ancient history a mountain called Ariha-Yeriho (Mount Jericho), as described by the Hebrew bible. As for the mountain that has the name of *Sihyoun*, it is a recent name that was invented by the settlers a few years ago. Whatever has been repeated in the historical books and studies about this crossing and conquering of Palestinian towns is not more than an orientalist imagination and a disgraceful surrender to it. It is high time we had declared its invalidity.

The orientalists have created for us a history that is rife with insoluble contradictions. We know, for example, that David and Solomon were ancient Yemeni kings; how have they become Palestinian? We also know that Jericho is at the lowest point below sea level; how does the bible claim that it is a rugged mountain? We also know from the bible that Qadas/Qadash is

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1 I do not wish to qualify myself as an isolated research-worker who does not belong to the prevalent historical methodologies. On the contrary, I wish to continue whence the new-historians have stopped. Having encountered a few contradictions, the new-historians acknowledged that the Great Exodus was nothing but a popular legend and that the whole history of the Sons of Israel had been invented because it did not identify with the Palestinian geography and it was impossible to get out of the cul-de-sac that had been created by the said contradictions unless the geography described by the Torah was moved to a different place. This is precisely what I try to do in this work of mine, which is what neither the new-historians nor the orientralists have had the courage to do. Although the new-historians had received some signals showing that the Torah had spoken of a different geography, they preferred to neglect them as being impossible, preferring to deny the whole narrative.

a mountain; how is it claimed to be the Arab city of al-Quds, which is neither a mountain, nor over a mountain, nor near one. This continuous counterfeiting of the history of Palestine has led many western and Arab historiographers to commit one of the greatest deceptions known to mankind when, intentionally or otherwise, forged historical ideas and conceptions have been promoted, like forcing us to believe that the Sons of Israel are **the** Jews, and that these same people had committed massacres against Palestinians 2,500 years ago, when they had conquered the Canaanite cities, led by Joshua and later by David. What we encounter today is a repetition of an event that had taken place in history, and that the enemy of the remote past has come back to meet us once again in the same tragic paths of history. This is not true at all. Neither the Jews of Europe belong to the Sons of Israel by simply being Jews, nor the ancient Hebrews were the Sons of Israel because their language is thought to be Hebrew, or because their great grandfather is call A'aber. The Philistines who were fought by David were certainly not the Palestinians.

This horrid misconception is the source and basis of counterfeiting the region's history.

Perhaps over the past one hundred years, we have sadly become prisoners of a none-historic discourse that is rife with false images and counterfeited narratives. What makes it worse is that the prevailing narrative about our ancient history was simply believed by our clergymen, politicians and common people. Even Arab historians, generally speaking, keep repeating the same orientalists' lies, without the least of scrutiny. This way we have become helpless in front of a fabricated history, and unable to correct it, believing that this fabricated history is the right one.

The creation of the story of crossing the River Jordan and conquering Jericho, followed by an imagined battle, called Har Majiddo, had made a victim out of us and a hero out of the other.

In fact, these events had not taken place in Palestine, and this particular battle had existed neither in the historical records nor in the oral narratives. It did not take place in Palestine at any time in recorded history and Joshua (Yehoshua‘ bin Nun) had never committed a massacre against the Palestinians, simply because he had not known Palestine and there had been no group of people called Palestinians where he had lived. When we challenge this counterfeit, using the tools of objective scientific research, we discover the following tragic fraud: if we accept the narrative of crossing of the Jordan and the conquering of Palestinian Jericho, believing the fabrication of the orientalists, as well as the archeologists of the Torah stream, we must accept the other part of the story, namely that the Palestinians are people who had sneaked into Palestine from Crete Island and competed with a peaceful people called the Sons of Israel on their historical homeland. This is but the essence of counterfeiting. The truth that one must defend, however, is that the *Philisteem*, whose name was mentioned by the Hebrew bible, are not the Palestinians and they had not sneaked from Crete. Besides, the people given this name by the Torah, the *Philisteem*, had never known Crete nor heard of it, because they were an atheist group of people living in mountainous seclusions in ancient Yemen in a valley that still carries their name until today, namely Wadi al-Mafalees (it is the plural of am-Fals, “*am*” being the archaic definite article in the old Himyari dialect). This we shall prove later with a clear-cut evidence.

What is the importance of straightening this history?

Nations do not rise and continue alive on the human stage by the sole effect of a common geography that is likely to bring together citizens in one national homeland that automatically grants them a national identity. This is an extreme imagination; for how many nations have been torn apart despite having lived in one geographic space? The central factor in the formation, survival and development of nations is the creative mixture of two great and dynamic factors: first, the existence of one official language – not a few discordant languages or local or tribal archaic dialects; second, the existence of one history, i.e. a unified and solid historic narrative that creates a national and a collective identity for citizens who wish to be one nation, but not discordant narratives of 'histories' that render them disputed groups over the events of history. Perhaps the American-Israeli experience in its present image is a practical example of this conception. Geography alone was not sufficient by itself for the creation of a unified American nation, which is composed basically of disintegrating social materials originating from different races and cultures that had crossed the Atlantic Ocean from Europe. Therefore, it was necessary for the English language to gain a final victory over all other languages and dialects carried over by the various immigrants, thence being amalgamated in one national language: English. Even though, this was not sufficient enough. It was also necessary to create a unifying narrative for all these different groups in order to build their unity on the basis of a common history that gathers the members of this nation around one common past that fortifies its concept of nationhood. This explains to us the secret behind the infatuation of the American historical culture with the existence of a spiritual and cultural connection with ancient as well as contemporary Israel. This old, albeit renewing infatuation may not be attributed to a political factor only. There is another

central factor that has to do with the fact that the unity of the Americans as a nation has become bound to the existence of a unifying historical narrative that narrates in one voice the story of the emotional and spiritual relationship that links them with Pentateuch Israel, i.e. the fabricated past of disconnected groups of people who found themselves in the great immigration from Europe to the other coast of the Atlantic unable to be unified unless they possessed a historical narrative with an emotional and spiritual content that ascends with them to the furthest possible point in remote history. This narrative was a kind of resemblance with the story of crossing the River Jordan in the Torah, albeit this time into the other bank, the American wilderness.

That is why the USA is called in Hebrew "*Arss ha-breet*" (ארץ הברית), meaning the Wild Land.

This narrative had played a great role in unifying the Americans in one nation on the emotional and historic levels. One could imagine what would happen to the unity of this nation in the absence of a central narrative of this kind, and how the various, discordant races and cultures of European, eastern and African origins would be amalgamated. Therefore, one must notice that the creation of the American nation went hand in hand with the creation of a common history that looked factual to the highest possible extent so that it could contribute to the unification of the early immigrants' sentiment, enabling them to become new citizens. The same had taken place in Palestine. Seizure of the land by itself was not sufficient to create a Jewish nation, which would be subject to dissolution by effect of the intense cultural differences among the various settlers. It was necessary, therefore, to create a common language that would reshape the collective sentiment for a group of people who spoke different languages. Thus, parallel with the German

scientists to revive the Hebrew language - which is originally an archaic Yemeni dialect - and to make it a unifying language, a remote history for those culturally different people was created. Suddenly, and just because they were all Jewish, they were claimed to belong to the ancient Sons of Israel. In other words, a single pedigree was created and called the Sons of Israel, despite the fact that they had originated from European peoples that had weak relationship with each other, perhaps harbored enmity to other Europeans. The purpose of creating this ancient history is granting those people an imaginative identity and making them think that one remote day, before being scattered among strange nations, they had been citizens of a great kingdom. In their new unity, they would regain their glorified past in one strike. One can imagine, for example, what can bring together a German Jew with a French one, while having had a long history of hatred and wars.

The Hebrew language was the great tool for founding the unity of these European settlers. Naturally, this was not sufficient. A unifying narrative for a collective sentiment was necessary for a common old history that would link the Jews of all nationalities to a new cultural, ultra-national race called the Sons of Israel, without knowing that this was nothing but the name of a tribe. The paradox in the contemporary existence of Israel is the fact that its "citizens" who have originated from great nations found themselves, at the end of the day, returning to the pre-historic ages when they found no race or nation to belong to except an extinct Arabian tribe called the Sons of Israel. It is a sarcastic paradox for a modern European immigrants to Israel. He/she has gotten rid of his/her affiliation to the French nation, for example, for the sake of being affiliated to an extinct Arabian tribe, the Sons of Israel. This has never happened in human history.

Out of this invention, another perplexing paradox has appeared. The history of these European people has become Israeli, but at the same time it has also become Palestinian, for their new history to which they have become affiliated is the ancient history of Palestine that they consider their promised land. However, even in this case, it becomes a common history with another people, the Palestinian people, for whom they harbor enmity and whom they wish to annihilate. Once again, the new history of those people who have started to speak one new language is the same history of ancient Palestine, not a pure Israeli history. That is why they went on digging in the Palestinian soil, searching for anything that might belong to them as an ancient group of people that was reborn. Thus, the creation of ancient Israel has organically gone hand in hand with the creation of ancient Palestine claimed to be the homeland of the Jews.

However, this Palestine, whose image had been planted into our consciousness according to the Torah regarding the Babylonian captivity, David's wars, the crossing of the River Jordan and the fall of Jericho, does not exist in the Torah. It is only a fabrication of the western historians, who were also followed by some Arabs and Muslims. This is because the Torah had not known of Palestine and had never mentioned its name. It is sad that the nation was unable to narrate its history in its own voice. It is even sadder to continue listening to its own history narrated by another voice. Invention of history in our present situation is most manifest in the following forged idea: without the least scientific proof, someone claims that the Torah had mentioned Palestine and recorded its name and that of the Palestinians. It had also mentioned the name of al-Quds and that David had fought the Palestinians, Solomon had built the temple there, Joshua (Yehoshua‘ bin Nun) had conquered Jericho after

crossing the Jordan, the Filisteem had been the Palestinians who had sneaked from the sea, Maidab is the Jordanian Madaba, Ma'n is the Jordanian Ma'an and Bayt Boos is in the suburbs of Damascus, etc. These narratives are historically false. Revealing the way in which the Palestinian history had been invented will be the core of our revision work that is based on denying the imaginative narrative that had been forged by the orientalists and on rebuilding of the historic narrative from a new perspective that is honest to the text. In the context of an extreme misguidance, it is not true that al-Quds had been known with its old name, Bayt Boos, because this name, al-Quds not Qadas, according the Torah, is a relatively new name that appeared at the dawn of Islam, and there is no language or historic proof that the Arabs had used it before that. Neither was it known before that in the name of Yaboos or Bayt Boos. Khalifa Omar ibn al-Khattab and the rest of the Muslims had recognized it in its Roman name, Ilyaa, not in the name of al-Quds. Contrary to what had been claimed, Prophet Muhammad used to know the holy mountain in Hijaz known as Qadas as well as the holy mountain in Taez, Yemen, called Qadas, but he did not know the Arab-Islamic al-Quds, because south Syria was known at that time in its Christian name Ilyaa, which was part of the Roman administrative division of Syria. What confirms this is the fact that the Prophet had sent to Hercules, of Byzantium (627 AD) a letter with his delegate Dahiyya al-Kalbi, whom he asked to go to Busra, Syria, to hand it over to him.

Al-Bukhari,[2] who had recorded the Prophet's Hadeeth, said: "When God had uncovered for Cesar the Persian soldiers, he marched from Hums to Ilyaa thankful to God for what He had

2 Al-Bukhari, Vol 10/95. see also *Sharh al-Nawawi* Yahya ibn Sharaf Abi zakariyya – Ali Muslim – Dar al-khayr 1996.

granted him." This means that the early Muslims had known the place in its Roman name, not as al-Quds; for its name, al-Quds, with "*al*" was adopted after the Islamic liberation, not before. It is certain that this deception on the part of the orientalists at the turn of the 19th century had achieved its purpose of making us believe, like the settlers, that the Torah had actually mentioned al-Quds. Thus the counterfeited narrative on the struggle between the Sons of Israel and the Palestinians, together with that on the crossing of the Jordan become quite credible. Rebuilding the historic narrative and making a new one that confronts the fake and prevailing narrative needs in the first place to smash the fake basis over which the myth of crossing the Jordan and conquering Jericho had been built.

Here, I wish to bring the reader's attention to the following point: denying the fake narrative that al-Quds was mentioned in the Torah is not for the purpose of belittling the greatness and holiness of this Arab-Islamic city. On the contrary, it is meant to defend it and deny the pretexts used for appropriating it. The Torah's Qadas is not the Arab al-Quds. In this context, I shall mention once again what al-Bakri had said in his *Mu'jam ma Ista'jam min Asmaa al-Bilad wa al-Mawadhi'* (*Dictionary of Unknown Names of Counties and Places*) about the story told by Ibn A'bbas that Prophet Muhammad had given Bilal ibn al-Hareth al-Muzni the tribe's settlements, both the high and the nether lands, to where agriculture is possible in al-Quds. In this prophet's letter there is a clear reference to mount al-Quds at Wadi al-Rimmah, not to any other place. In the chapter on Arabia, he said, "Juhaynah had settled in these lands where their tribes met each other and became around 20 branches. And then the tribes of Juhaynah were scattered in those mountains, namely al-Asha'r, al-Ajrad, Quds, Aarah, Radhwa and Sandad."

Al-Bakri also tells what had been told by Ya‘qoub ibn al-Sukayt (d. 243 H): "Quds and Aarah are two mountains for Juhaynah between the volcanic land of the Sons of Saleem and al-Madina." They are two mountains described as al-Qudsan (the two Qudses): the white Quds and the black Quds. The white one is separated from Warqan by a pass called Rukoubah, which is a high mountain that reaches al-Muta‘sha between al-A‘rja and al-Suqya. The black Quds is separated from Warqan by a pass called Hamat. The two mountains belong to the tribe of Muzaynah.

In short, this is how the Muslims had described the mountain called Quds in Hijaz. Parallel to it, there is another description for the Yemenis regarding a holy mountain, namely Mount Qadas in Taez. It is one of its greatest, holiest and most famous mountains in history. The Muslim conquerors had taken the name of this holy mountain and given it to this new city that had been freed of the Roman administration. These continuous imaginations and lies on the part of the Torah followers and, unfortunately, on the part of some Arabs and Muslims had created a great chaos in history that is impossible to be freed of. After one whole century of archeological excavations, no one has found Bayt Boos that is claimed to be the ancient al-Quds. No one either has found any material proof to confirm that al-Quds had been known with this name. It is certain that these claims and illusions had emerged from a greater illusion that had been promoted by the story of crossing the Jordan.

This is what I intend to evoke in my new contribution in the context of my project for correcting the history of Palestine and the region. In this context, there are some widespread, albeit wrong ideas and images in the books of ancient history in general and in the regional history, in particular, like the confusion

between the Hebrews and the Sons of Israel, dealing with them as one, where each by itself means the other. This is absolutely false. Other fake ideas that are also repeated are to the effect that the Hebrews' name had been derived from the event of crossing the River Jordan, which is a baseless false event.[3]

What our book says, contrary to all prevailing theories is the following:

1. Joshua had never crossed the Jordan and had never conquered Palestinian Jericho. The Torah does not know of these two names in this wording, but in another totally different wording that has to do with a different geography. Besides, the Hebrews had never crossed this river and the stage of events that the orientalists of the Torah stream had created and promoted does not have in any possible way the places and the tribal names that had been mentioned in the Torah. In fact, no event of this kind in the whole of the ancient history had existed and caused the appearance of a group of people that would call itself Hebrews (I'branis) because of their crossing the Jordan. Whatever books or studies written in the Arab or Western cultures on this event are but forged and based on illusion mixed with admiration of contemporary Israel. In our opinion, what is meant by the Hebrews (I'branis) and the Sons of Israel are two separate groups of people, not one. This distinction is extremely important for untying the arbitrary connection between them, which has inspired many human generations all over the world that the Israelis are the grandsons of the Hebrews, from whom they have inherited the ancient Hebrew tongue.

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3 The Arabic name of the Hebrew is *I'brani*, and the Arabic word for a crosser in is *a'aber*, hence the confusion. [the translator]

2. In the context of this claim, the idea that the Jews of today in the whole world are the progeny of the Sons of Israel has been spread even in the academic media. Hence, a new fake unification has occurred between the tribe - the Sons of Israel - and those who adopt Judaism as their religion. A Jew, therefore, is understood to be a descendent of the Sons of Israel who had been mentioned in both the Torah and the Quran, at the same time, to the effect that the Sons of Israel would mean the Jews.

This is certainly an invented but wrong conception.

3. The other wrong and baseless claim is saying that the Arabs and the Jews are cousins, with Abraham being their great grandfather. This is also baseless in both anthropology and the historical records. It is illogical because blood kinship cannot occur between Arab tribes and people from other regions in the world, like Europeans who had converted to Judaism. How can one imagine that a Muslim Egyptian is a cousin of a Polish Jew? It is also illogical from an anthropological angle to imagine a blood kinship on the basis of religion between members of two Arab tribes, because kinship is always based on race, not on religion.

4. Within this confusion, the parallel fake idea that the Sons of Israel had crossed the Jordan had been systematically promoted. This is a misleading digression consequent to the arbitrary unification between them and the Hebrews. Another myth has spread in a large number of books claiming that the Hebrews (I'bris) are the offspring of a historical figure called A'aber, to whom the Hebrew (I'bri) language is attributed and the Israelis are his grandchildren.

5. Those people, the Sons of Israel, so the myth goes, became Hebrews (I‘bris) because they had crossed the Jordan. Thus a series of similarities had arisen between races, groups of people, dialects and languages that had appeared in various times in history without any real connections. It is interesting to know that the official Hebrew language in Israel today is called the Sananite Hebrew, i.e. the original ancient Hebrew of Sanaa, capital of Yemen.

6. In the context of this fake sameness, many have ignored the simple fact that Judaism is an ancient Arabian religion that had dawned among the southern Arabs, the Yemenis. It was not a western religion, nor was it imported from outside Arabia. It had spread in Yemen in ancient times that are vaguely known by written history. The Torah, as known to ancient Arabs, is a holy religious book of news written by ancient Yemenis containing the religious legislation, stories, news and poems that the Sons of Israel had recorded.

Like other holy books, the Torah contains tales and news of ancient tribes and people known to the Arabs, some of which belong to the Yemeni people, like al-Salaf (al-Shalaf) Jasham, A‘bd, Salamah, Jabr and al-Hawasheb (Hashbon), etc.

7. What is certain for me, as I have shown in previous occasions, is that the Torah has nothing to do with Palestine or to refer to it in any way; indeed, there is not the least link in the Torah with the history of Palestine. Whatever has been claimed that the Torah had described the land of Palestine is nothing more than orientalist fabrications that belong to and are products of the colonial time. What is interesting is that invention of history was sometimes based on wrong translation and superficial interpretation of the word “ha-Filishteem” (הפלשתים) claiming

that it refers to the Palestinians. We had shown in our previous books that the name is that of the Falastes, who are an extinct atheist group of ancient Arabs that had been named after their god, al-Falas, god of Tayy and other Arabian tribes. The name of this god is still found in Yemen in the place called Wadi al-Mafalees (=al-Filsyyeen), according the Himyari dialect. The Torah confirms that they are indeed an atheist group of people, the icons of which had been seized by David. Fabrication had reached its climax when a fake theory had been promoted to the effect that the Palestinians had surreptitiously entered Palestine from the Greek island of Crete. What is unfortunate is that some Arab writers had repeated this falsehood without scrutiny, perhaps out of their ignorance of the Hebrew language. This myth was based on one word that appeared in a secondary book written by some Jewish Cohens (priests) at a late time and within a narrative order that includes some religious prayers against the Kartis (כרתים). Those are a group of Yemeni people called *al-Karthiyyeen*. Apart from this, there is nothing in the Torah that supports this misleading idea about the Palestinians sneaking from Crete Island.

8. The Holy Quran, as well as the pre-Islamic Arabs, had precisely differentiated between Judaism and the Sons of Israel. Judaism is a religion and the Sons of Israel are a tribe. This is quite clear in the Quranic verses that condemn the Jews but praise the Sons of Israel.[4] This differentiation borrows its scientific strength from a cultural and a religious fact known to ancient Arabs that Judaism is an Arabian religion that had appeared in Yemen, not elsewhere. Prophet Moses was certainly

4 This differentiation is clear in many Quranic verses, like this: “We settled the Israelites in a blessed land and provided them with good things. Nor did they disagree among themselves until knowledge was given them. Your Lord will discuss their differences on the Day of Resurrection.

not German nor was David Polish. According to this obvious fact that had always been ignored or neglected in the course of discussions, the Torah comprises poems, stories and legends about some ancient Arabs, but nothing about the ancient Palestinian history. Again, Prophet Muhammad's Hadith that refers to Moses as a Yemeni prophet has always been overlooked. He said that Moses was a man with black hair from Shanoah (Azd Shanoah), which is a most famous tribe in Yemen. In al-Bukhari's *Saheeh*, al-A'sqalani[5] mentions the text of that Hadith in this way: "In my nocturnal journey, I saw Moses who had black hair and looked like a man from Shanoah." This hadith confirms that the Arab historical memory has the image of Prophet Moses looking like a man from a specific tribe of Yemen, which is one of the strongest ancient Arabian tribes called Azd Shanoah.[6]

9. If, in principle, we accept these two fundamental facts, we have to precisely distinguish between the tribe and the religion, between the tribe of Qurayash and Islam; for Qurayash does not mean Islam. We cannot presume that every descendant of Quraysh is necessarily Muslim, and we cannot presume that every Muslim is necessarily a descendent of Quraysh. Therefore, we must differentiate between the tribe called the Sons of Israel and Judaism, making a conceptual cadre that correctly places both the tribe and the religion; for it is not true that whoever descends from the Sons of Israel tribe is necessarily Jewish and it is not true either that every Jew necessarily descends from the tribe of the Sons of Israel.

5 Ahmad ibn A'li ibn Hujr al-A'sqalani, *Fath al-Bari fi Sahrh Saheeh al-Bukhari*. Al-Rayyan, 1986. p. 3214.

6 Shlomo Sand, the famous archeologist, assures there are several contradiction in the exodus narrative ,as research proved that palestine was under Egyptian rule during the supposed time of the Exodus. This would mean that Moses would have led the enslaved Hebrews "out of Egypt…to Egypt?"

In this context, I shall stop at a flagrant example of playing with the Torah itself, not with history, one that the late Prof. Kamal Salibi had warned about. The Torah had mentioned a religious schism that led to a secession of the kingdom of the Sons of Israel into two warring kingdoms: one in the south called Yehutha (Judah) and accused of apostasy, with its inhabitants being indulged in atheism. The other in the north bears the name of Israel. This description of the Torah that Yehutha (Judah) is in the south and Israel is in the north totally contradicts the nature of today's Israel.

10. The term of the Hebrews, according to historical scientific standards, refers to many groups of people, not to one only, whereas the term of the Sons of Israel refers to a specific tribe. Any confusion in this will necessarily lead to faulty consequences, similar to the consequences reached by the orientalist research works. Regrettable it is that some Arab historians, like Jawad Ali,[7] had committed a mistake in reading Arab heritage, instilling in the brains of some Arab generations wrong ideas about the real intentions of the Torah's stories. In his analysis of the writings of the Arab *khabar*[8] narrators on Wadi Hadhour of Yemen (Hassour in the Torah), which had been conquered by the Assyrian armies, Jawad Ali committed a grave mistake when he condemned the classical Arab *khabar* narrators' understanding of the *khabar* reported by the Arabs. He wrote the following: "The *khabar* narrators were not precisely aware of what was reported by the Torah. They did not conceive that it was impossible for the people of Hassour to be from Yemen,

7 Jawad Ali, *al-Mufadhal,* 1/121.

8 *Khabr* in old Arabic literature is a kind of short tales told by narrators about events and people. Some of them are real and some are fictitious. Strictly, the word *khabar* in Arabic means a piece of news. [the translator]

because the Torah's mentioning them with Qeedar assumes their places to be in North Arabia. Besides, Yemen is very far from Nebuchadnezzar and it is impossible for his armies to easily reach there. The Jewish books, not well aware of Yemen, describe Hassour to be in a place in North Arabia near the land of Qeedar."

In our previous book,[9] we had shown in details, and we shall do here too, that Hadhour (Hassour) is located in the South Arabia, not in the north. It is one of the greatest valleys in Yemen, where the greatest *miklafs* (governorates) had thrived. Therefore, any text that belittles the [classical Arab] *khabar* narrators without a clear-cut proof based on correct understanding and right facts is invalid.

11. Such a differentiation that we suggest is extremely necessary for a veritable understanding of the events of history; for the legend of crossing the River Jordan is originally linked with the Hebrews, not with the Sons of Israel. The Hebrews, it is said, have borrowed their name from this legendary event. In spite of the absence of any historic proof that supports it, and in spite of the fact that nothing in the Torah refers to a direct relationship with the Sons of Israel, the claim that they had crossed the Jordan towards the Palestinian Promised Land after conquering Jericho had prevailed. Naturally, as a consequence to this arbitrary confusion on the part of some western and eastern archeologists, the legend of the crossing had been automatically attributed to the Sons of Israel. This is what had contributed to the creation of a great chaos in the historical sequence of kingdoms and events in the region.

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9 *Haqeeqat al-Saby al-Babili (The Fact of the Babylonian Captivity).* (Beirut: Jadawel Publishers, 2011).

12. Untying the link between these names, concepts, conceptions and terminologies is what makes students of history correctly see the facts.

13. The prevailing illusions in the Palestinian history that mostly causes chaos and confusion is the claim that Palestine is the land of the Canaanites and that those people were its original inhabitants. This claim is taken from a wrong reading of the Torah. This had led to an imagination saying that al-Quds had the name of Yaboos (Boos) and that its ancient inhabitants were Yaboosis and Canaanites. Today, we must ask whoever insists on this claim to give us a scientific proof or an ancient inscription that confirms this piece of information. All that these people have is the misleading stock provided by the orientalists after having brought to an end their battle with the old Palestinian and Arab history; a stock that is unfit for a scientific discussion for the simple reason that Yaboos (Boos, after dropping off the Himyari prefix "ya"), the mountainous invincible fort, as described by the Torah, is not at all in Palestine. What has been claimed about its existence as a village called Bayt Yaboos in the suburbs of Damascus is a proof of this deception. For how can a respectful archeologist venture a claim based on similarity of names that the Torah's description of a mountainous fort identifies with a Damascene village that is not linked to Palestine with a series of mountains?

14. Finally, I wish to present the following to the none-specialized readers:

My work has nothing to do with verifying the sameness of the names of places. I am simply not interested in this matter, since it is unscientific to look for similarities of places between the Torah and any geography. Apart from this kind of

superficial impressions, what my research work is interested in is to emphasize that the Torah is a book of religion that belongs to the Yemeni Jews and has nothing to do with Palestine and that the history that has to do with its texts must be placed back within the history of Yemen not that of Palestine. In this book, I shall show in details how the Torah's texts have been wrongly and misleadingly read and that we have fallen victims to the traditional biblical orientalists and their fabrications. I shall give forward a reading based on field research that specifies the place of Jerusalem, Bayt Boos, Mount Qadas and the valley of the Filistis (ha-Filishteem).

In my previous book, *Filisteen al-Mutakhayyalah* (*Imagined Palestine*),[10] I wrote the following: "It is high time for Europe and the whole West to apologize in frank words to the Palestinians, the rest of the Arabs and the Muslims for the tragic consequences that had been caused by the colonial imagination and the arrogance of the orientalists in destroying a whole people and ousting them from their homeland by force, leading to the Judaization of the Palestinian history. This, however, will not be sufficient without a courageous step taken by the world biblical scholars in making a clear-cut declaration confirming the invalidity of the colonial reading of the Hebrew bible and admitting the gross mistake committed and the fact that being a member of a certain religion does not grant anybody the right of usurping the homelands of other people. They must admit the necessity of a new interpretation of the Hebrew bible, which eliminates any imaginary connection with Palestine."

At the end of this résumé, I wish to remind the reader of what I had written before, repeating the said idea for the sake of

10 *Filisteen al-Mutakhayyalah (Imagined Palestine)*. 2 volumes, Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 2009 (3 prints).

avoiding any misunderstanding or interpretation resulting from superficial understanding of the purpose of this work:

No group of people has any religious or historical right to claim possession of other people's homeland just because they belong to a certain religion. As Quraysh is an Arab not a Chinese tribe, a Chinese Muslim may not claim his/her kinship to Quraysh just because he/she is Muslim. The same is true with a German, Ukrainian, American or Scandinavian Jew claiming kinship with the Sons of Israel just because he/she is a Jew. The author, therefore, refuses any claim on the part of Western Jews that Yemen must belong to them. Nations are born, rise and get united only when they possess one true narrative regarding their history. This means that they must possess one coherent narrative, not contradicting various narratives, about themselves. History is a central factor in the making of nations and keeping their unity and existence, the same like a common land and a unifying language. No doubt for me that what I do over the past few years is an establishment of a revisionist current that would bring an end to chaos in the narrative that had been left for us by the foreign orientalists. Unless the nation is capable of freeing itself of the chaos in understanding and correctly reading its history, it will never be able to remain on the stage of history and will end up torn apart with deep contention. The orientalist interpretation of the Hebrew bible had caused chaos in the whole human history, which led to continuous and bloody conflicts, where the question of conflict over the land and the historical rights is no more central; for history itself has become the subject matter of these struggles.

It will look as if it is a long bloody struggle between tow histories: a real one and a fabricated one.

# Chapter One

***Did the Sons of Israel Cross The Jordan?***

Did the Sons of Israel really cross The River Jordan to reach Palestine? Or did they cross another river that is mentioned in the Torah as ha-Yeriden (ha- yarden) (הירדן), which is located in another place that has nothing to do with ancient south Syria? However, where did they come from to cross that river? Did they arrive, as claimed, from Egypt (מצרים) through Sinai and were they led by Moses?[11] If we accept this widespread assumption, why did they need to cross The Jordan as long as Sinai is connected with Gaza, thence to the heart of Palestine? Still, if they had to go from another place in south Syria, for example, why do we not find any trace of this great journey in East Jordan? There is certainly a flagrant fault in the prevailing narrative regarding this imagined crossing that was founded by the orientalist narrative and promoted by Arab authors and archeologists to college students as well as to common people. Even though, the same question must be asked: did the Sons of Israel really cross the River Jordan or did they cross another

11 As is well known, the Egyptians kept extensive records. If Hebrews had been enslaved in Egypt for four centuries there should be wide-ranging written evidence of that and there is none. The one Egyptian stela that mentions "Israel" refers to the Egyptian pharaoh's crushing of a rebellion in Palestine in which "Israel" is listed as only one tribe among many others. Babylonian and Assyrian records are quite numerous as well, and depict other great rivals in the region in detail

river called ha-Yeriden. Were they really called Hebrews (I'bris) because of this claimed crossing (*U'boor*)? Or is *I'bris* (Hebrews) a name of other people who have no connection with those? Who had decided this identification between these names and places and for what purpose? We shall discover that the invention of the story of crossing The River Jordan as a historical event was originally a consequent of a larger invention not only of the history of Palestine, but also of the history of Arabian Judaism itself. No doubt that the Jews of Europe, and then the Jews of the Arab orient, were victims of a great deception that is not less tragic than what happened to the people of Palestine. Objectively and with a live human conscience, one can imagine the meaning behind the discovery on the part of a Jew, after decades of continuous wars and crimes, that what he/she had learnt about the relationship between Palestine and the Torah was sheer deception, because the Torah had never mentioned the name of Palestine, which had never been his/her Promised Land, and none of David's wars and heroic deeds had occurred over it, and that those who had made him/her believe that he/she had a right in this land had actually turned him/her into a criminal, whether aware of it or oblivious. The tragedy is apt to reach its climax when the hero turns into a victim or when he/she discovers that his/her heroism has been nothing but a crime.

As the strategy of this work stands on scientific research regarding the geography of Yemen as described by the Torah, which I had detailed in my previous works, I shall use a scholarly approach based on three correlated tools:

1) The Hebrew text re-translated, showing the nature of counterfeit that had been subjected to by the editors and the translators;

2) Inscriptions and archeological records and artifacts in Yemen, especially al-Musnad's inscriptions, some of which is available with me, confirming with no doubt that the Torah's stage had been the ancient land of Yemen;

3) Field research.

Rebuilding the historic narrative with scientific courage will reveal the size of playing with the Arab history, particularly the Palestinian history. Yet it also reveals a scientific scandal that has been camouflaged for various reasons.

As far as this point is concerned, the legend of crossing the River Jordan had played a central role in the Jewish-Christian imagination during the British campaign to seize Palestine at the beginning of the 19$^{th}$ century, as much as the role being played today by the legend of the battle of har-Megiddo in the American thought, with the purpose of justifying waging new wars in order to speed up the appearance of Jesus Christ. With the emergence of the colonial era, it became clear that Palestine had formed an ideological and spiritual goal for a new group of colonial (Intellectuals), men of letter, novelists and archeologists in Britain, France and Western Europe in general, who had found that their organic involvement in the project of capturing Palestine was an embodiment of the spirit of Judeo-Christian salvation. In this sense, the battle of Napoleon over A'kka (Acre) in 1799 would reveal a real correlation between the European colonial project and the ascendance of the Judeo-Christian thinking to prove that Palestine was the Promised Land. Shortly after the end of the Battle over Acre, specifically in 1804, the first archeological commission by the name of the Palestine Nexus was formed in Britain and composed of British wealthy men, whose activity was totally concentrated on taking care of the ancient ruins of Palestine as Israeli ruins.

Parallel to the idea of crossing the Jordan by the ancient Israelis and based on the Torah's stories, came up the idea of a great and decisive battle in the Jewish history, called the battle of Megiddo that found its way into the Christian-Jewish thought and became a religious faith. Based on the belief in a new and contemporary legend that has been widely adopted, it is to the effect that the battle of Megiddo will break out once again and will lead to a New Jerusalem that will descend from Heaven. Thus, starting from the last decade of the 19th century, the Centennial Idea was finally established in the Protestant faith. As we had previously shown, we shall show in this contribution more in details some of the aspects related to this alleged battle, particularly those connected to the legend of the crossing, with the purpose of placing them in a more comprehensive frame of analysis in order for us to clearly show the deceptive nature of the orientalist images regarding crossing River Jordan: how the Torah had narrated the crossing story so that it was concluded later that its purpose was to relate a specific event, namely the crossing of River Jordan. Is there really a story in the Torah about it, or is it a matter of queer European imagination that had read the Torah with the intention of identifying it with the land of Palestine, without having an origin in the Hebrew text? In this work, I shall present some of the Torah's texts on the crossing story in order to show the dimensions of the counterfeit.

The story of the crossing is linked to the ascension of Joshua's role, the disciple and successor of Moses in leading the Sons of Israel, who had received the Lord Yahweh's order to assume the leadership of the people in their march to salvation. It is clear that the context of the narrative does not refer to any real and authenticated historical aspect as much as it refers to details that have religious-mythological nature similar to,

almost identical with the traditional Arab narratives that tell of immigrations, wars and great battles unrecorded by history, but kept being repeated and passed from one generation to another. In this respect, we must notice that the oral history of the most ancient tribes is manifested in a mixture of legends and life events. Because of this, it often looks less than pure history and more of people's mythological narratives that express various concepts. This marginal notice is extremely important for differentiating between what is historical and what is legendary. This is because not all that is narrated from old sources, whether they are religious or informational, is pure historical material that must be accepted. Legends are not mere meaningless myths. The same applies to the figures and heroes in these sources, for it is not necessary that every figure or hero is a historical reality. When we read a text about Joshua, for example, we accept it as a text related to a religious not a historical figure, because we do not possess any authenticated data (records, inscriptions, etc.) that prove his existence. On the contrary, we easily accept another text about Nebuchadnezzar, for example, as one about a confirmed, historical figure, for the simple reason that we possess records and written documents that confirm his existence on the ancient human stage. This, however, does not justify denying the existence of religious heroes and figures or arguing about their reality. What is extremely important is noticing that this differentiation has the purpose of distinguishing between what is historical and what is legendary.

In this case, whatever has been mentioned in the Torah about Joshua's crossing of the Jordan is not authenticated history; essentially, they are mythological narratives of events and figures acceptable only in their capacity as being religious not historical material. Only in this context has the Torah told

the tale of the Jordan crossing; but which Jordan is it? In the text of Joshua (יהושע)[12] (4: 15-21), which is the most important text that narrates the crossing story, there is a description of one of the great valleys that does not identify in any way with the geography of ancient Syria, neither in geography nor in names. It is called ha-Yeridin (הירדן) in the text. There is another vague and confusing version about the alleged the Jordan crossing that the European reading had evaded thinking deeply about it; let us say it had been sly about it by completely hiding it away, intending to erase the whole question of Jordan from being discussed. It is River al-Ardam (הירדים), not Jordan that is referred to in the other texts, but was understood to be the Arab state of Jordan. Following is the text of the Torah, which talks clearly of the following idea: "The Sons of Israel had crossed the river carrying the Ark of the Covenant: (the Hebrew text: 3:16)

"ויעמדו-המים -הירדם-מ-למעלה-קמו-נד-אחד-ה-רחק-מאד-ב-אדם-ה-

עיר-אשר-מצד-צרתן-וה-ירדם-על- ים - הערבה- ים- ה-מלח"

> *"They were stopped by the waters of the-Ardam streaming from al-Ma'lah, and then they stood up and went towards Rahaq, getting away in Wadi Adeem in the vicinity of Sirtin. The waters of al-Ardam streams up towards Wadi al-A'rab, Yam and Mount al-Milh."*

Before discussing the text, I wish to bring the reader's attention to the fact that the Hebrew text is void of punctuation marks so that one name may look compound, like Yam al-Milh,

12 I beg my readers to notice that the name of Joshua is written in Hebrew as Yehusha' ( יהושע ). This "h" should remind us of the way the Yemenis write the names of their ancient kings and figures. This is something peculiar of both Hebrew and the Yemeni dialects.

whereas it is meant to be Mount Yam and Mount al-Milh. Besides, numerous names are written according to the Yemeni phonetics, or what is known as al-Kalaa‘ dialect, where the letter “n” is added to the beginning or the end of the name, like Araben for Arab. Sometimes it comes in the middle, like barna‘ for Bara‘. Besides, Hebrew has not the Arabic letters “dh,” “th,” and “kh. I also wish to point out that some authors and writers of the Torah stream are the ones who had created the so-called Dead Sea, claiming that the Torah had recorded the name by translating the name of Yam al-Milh into the Dead Sea [Salt Sea]. This is certainly an orientalist fabrication, because “Yam” here does not mean sea, but name of a mountain, and “Yam Milh,” therefore, means the famous Mount a-Milh (Salt Mountain), not the Salt Sea.

Following is what the text states: Somewhere in its journey, the immigrating group carrying the Ark of the Covenant had come across torrential waters inundating a valley called Wadi al-Ardam (ha-Yardim), but not a river, called River Jordan. Since they were unable to cross it, they decided to move away towards another place called Rahaq. As the translators were unable to understand the sentence, they translated the name of the place arbitrarily to “long distance”, knowing that there is no approximate meaning to the word in Hebrew. After that, the group marched to a mountain called Adem at the end of its water, near a fortress called Sarten ( מצד-צרתן ), “Sarra Fortress”, where the water flows towards al-A‘rab valley , Mount Yam and Mount al-Milh, where it pours. In this narrow corridor, the immigrating group went on to cross ha-Yardim (al-Ardam). Neither this al-Ardam Valley, nor Adem Valley, nor al-A‘rab valley, nor Mount Yam al-Milh, nor Sarten Fortress, nor the place called Rahaq are found in East-Jordan or in historical Palestine. Those places,

which are mountains and valleys with torrential waters and are impossible to be wiped out, are also not found in the geography of old Syria. Even though, the orientalist reading had ignored these facts and continued supporting the idea of crossing Jordan as a historical reality that has been repeated. In this context, the Arabic translation had deluded the text; for instead of writing al-Ardam in the phrase ( הירדים מ למעלה ויעמדו ), based on the original letters, the translators claimed that it meant "a mass of water", "The descending water from the height of the river stopped in one mass." This translation is unacceptable by any standard, because what is meant is not "a mass of water", but the water of a specific valley, called al-Ardam Valley. The right meaning of the sentence is the following: "The water of al-Ardam stopped them from al-Mi'lah." These are two places, one is called ha-Yardim and the other al-Mi'lah, which is the mountainous height. And then the Sons of Israel, according to the narrative, had crossed another place with torrential waters, albeit from its narrowest path at the end of the water flowing near Sarten from Mount Adem, from where it flowed to a nearby valley called ha-A'rabah (al-A'rab). Certainly, the narrator of the Hebrew text did not mean River Jordan, for had he wanted to record this event of crossing, he would have to say "through River ha-Yeriden, as usual, not Yerideem." Besides, the waters of the Jordan Valley do not stop at a place called Mount Adem and do not flow to ha-A'rabah (al-A'rab) valley near Sarten. The orientalist reading had claimed that the name of ha-A'rabah confirms that it is the Jordanian Wadi A'rabah. This is totally unacceptable because it ignores the fact that the name ha-A'rabah includes the definite article "ha" (the A'rabah), not A'rabah alone. The translation also ignores the fact that the names al-Ardeem and ha-Yeriden cannot be the same. Was the narrator of the Hebrew text referring to another place that does not exist in Palestine and has nothing

to do with its geography? What happens if we look into the real geography of the Torah outside the text that had been read with an orientalist imagination that knows nothing real about the historical environment of the holy bible? What will certainly happen is that we shall turn the history of the Torah upside down so that its narratives will have no connection with Palestine.

Following is al-Hamadani describing and verifying the name of al-Ardam Valley (p.305):

> *"From Aden to Lahaj, al-Asabeh's land, and then al-Suhayb, part of which is Saba of Suhayb, a tribe of Saba. And then al-Hubayl, and then the lower part of Wadi al-Ardam, which is Wadi al-Aju'd and then Sur, followed by Thareed."*

This is al-Ardam Valley exactly as in the Hebrew wording. At the time of al-Hamadani it was called Wadi al-Aju'd, which is located on the road from Aden to Lahaj, the second governorate in South Yemen, near Sur of Yemen, near Wadi Thareed (Sareed in the Torah, because "th" is replaced by "s" in Hebrew.)[13] Therefore, one can consider this as a proof, small though it may be, in a series of many linguistic proofs that we shall present to confirm that the Hebrew language is a dialect of some tribes in south Arabia, like the dialects of A'ad, Thamud, the Safweens, the Ma'iniyeens and the Nabatis. Now, let us go back to the text:

Had the traveling group decided to evade the flowing waters of this valley, they should practically go towards Mikhlaf al-Suhool where Mount Adem is located, not to anywhere else. There, they would see the same stream of water flowing into

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13 This is the phonetic origin for pronouncing the "th" as "s" in some dialects in Syria and Egypt.

Wadi al-A‘rab towards Mount Yam and Mount al-Milh. If we move in the region of River Jordan, we shall never reach any of the said places in the Hebrew text, whereas if we do the other way round, we won’t enter with Joshua into Palestine, but rather into the land of Sarat Himyar, where, once upon a time, two kingdoms had risen: Israel in the north (east of Sanaa) and Judea in the south (Aden and Hadhramawt.) When we compare the Torah’s description with the geography of Upper and Lower Wissab Directorates, we shall find there Wadi al-Ardam (al-Aju‘d, named after the tribe that had settled there) in the western part of the city of Thamar, whose height above sea level is between 1400 and 2600 meters. In this beautiful place in Yemen, it is possible to see the mountainous series permeated by fertile valleys, the most important of which are Wadi al-Nar in the Directorate of Atmah (as in the Torah) and Wadi Zubayd (Zibah in the Torah), which passes through the Directorate of Hazm al-A‘deen (A‘deen, in the Torah) of the Governorate of Ibb. At last we can see Wadi al-Ardam whose water is mixed with that of Wadi Zubayd. This means that the stage of the Torha’s event had been in the borderline’s triangle between old Thamar, Ibb and al-Baydaa, where the travelers had encountered the valley’s waters and were forced to retreat towards Ibb Governorate. Rahq that was arbitrarily translated as a verb, is a famous mountainous village that is still there in al-Makhader Directorate within U‘zlat[14]al-Sharaf in Ibb, exactly as described by Joshua. The Torah records this U‘zlat al-Sharaf in the same wording in more than one place, as we had shown in our *Filisteen al-Mutakhayyala* (*Imagined Palestine*).

14 U'zlah is a name given to a secluded place in the mountains and valleys in Yemen.

Is there a geographical mistake or is it related to an arbitrary identification between the Torah's texts and the geography of Palestine on the part of the Torah's people? Before giving an answer to this question, I wish to draw the reader's attention to what is called in the science of geography the "line of water division," which is a very important geographical idea that can be understood only by forming a methodical comprehension for tracing the paths of the valleys referred to by Joshua's text. The uniqueness of the Yemeni geography is clear here, as it includes a great number of valleys that bring water from everywhere. The line of water division in Yemen is specifically located in the series of Saru Himyar, which is the great height from where water flows through a number of valleys in the east, west and south. There are more than four great valleys that form this great aqueous wealth. They have been mentioned by the Torah in the present forms with no modification. One of them is Wadi Mour (Book of Genesis). Generally speaking, these valleys run into the Red Sea with the exception of some of the other small valleys, which have also been mentioned in the Torah, like the valleys of Tibn, Bina and Hadramawt, which run into Aden Bay and the Arab Sea.

Therefore, the image of the people, who had been besieged by the water during their immigration from one place to another, will look quite subtle and incomparable with that of the Valley of Jordan that is scarce in water. Besides, in Jordan as a country, there is no such water like that which the traveling group had encountered and because of which they were unable to move on. We shall, therefore, look in this space for the places by which the crossing group had passed carrying the Ark of the Covenant. These valleys, according to the Hebrew text, are: Wadi al-A'rab, Mount Yam, Mount al-Milh and Sarten. We had noticed that Wadi al-Ardam, whose water had hindered the

advancement of the said group, was one of the most important valleys in Thamar and Rahq, in which they had taken refuge, was a mountainous seclusion on the borderline with the governorate of Ibb. Because of this, they moved towards Mount Yam that still keeps its name as in the Torah within the administrative borders of Naham Directorate, which is the largest directorate of Sanaa Governorate. It is a large mountain that connects with al-Jawf. Generally speaking, the valleys of Naham run into al-Jawf region. Naham is a large Yemeni tribe, whose property is located northeast of Sanaa, bordered from the north and the east by al-Jawf and the land of Sufyan, from the south by the high Khawlan and from the west by Arhab. As for Wadi al-Milh, it is one of the existing valleys, being part of Shara'b Governorate that belongs to Taez. Its waters mix with the valleys flowing from Aden. In this marvelous geographic space is Wadi al-A'rab, but it is not known with its old name any more. According to al-Hamadani's description, it outflows from Zubayd between Balad Bani Majeed and Abyan, ending in Aden after passing near some of these places. On the western edges of this valley, al-Salaf land is located, together with al-Rabi'yyeen (Reuben ( ראובן ), from which the name of the Israeli tribe had originated) until it reaches Khadeer Directorate in Taez. Thence, its water runs to the sea. Wadi Adeem, towards which the group had moved to evade the torrential waters, is located in the same place at al-Maqatra region (al-Shamayteen Directorate) that is part of Taez Governorate. The new administrative division, however, which changed al-Maqatra into a directorate, had placed it again within the directorates of Lahaj Governorate after having been part of Taez Governorate. al-Maqatra Directorate is a rocky mountainous region, one of its most important valleys is Wadi Adeem, which is mentioned by al-Hamadani within the land of al-Sakasek.

Now, by following the road taken by the caravan, we have the following possibility: either the traveling group carrying the Ark of the Covenant had come from Saadah, its spiritual and historical center, going to Aden, or the other way round. (Until today, the Jews of Saadah know that the stories of the Torah had taken place in their country, not in Palestine.) The Jewish religious traditions of carrying the Ark of the Covenant and moving with it from one place to another is an essential part of the traditions that are adhered to, particularly in battles; for the Ark of the Covenant is the protector of the fighters and the source of their victory.

Here, I wish to bring the reader's attention to the fact that the Ark of the Covenant is not a coffin or a box, as one may wrongly think; for it is implausible for a group of people to carry in the wars a coffin that needs 20 men at least to carry. This will certainly hinder the fighting knights and will cause confusion in their lines. It is rather a religious sign that is carried like a flag by one man and the knights will take turn in carrying it if it falls down. Perhaps the Torah text that mentions the name of Saadah[15] is one of the texts that had been played with. It was translated into Su'ud (ascension), while the text refers to a specific place (צעדה). Alone in this frame, we must assume that the difference between al-Ardam and ha-Yeriden is not only a small linguist difference that can be overlooked. On the contrary, it is an essential difference that has to do with geography and must never be overlooked. In principle, the following are some preliminary proofs: the Book of Joshua dedicates a full chapter to the four tribes of Israel, namely Gad, Manasseh, Joseph and Reuben, describing their territories and how they came to camp

15 Book of Kings: 5: 23: 25.

in what is called west and east of ha-Yeriden. The orientalist reading of the Torah has been keen on promoting the idea that ha-Yeriden is actually River Jordan. Thus the west bank of the river is Palestine. This identification is wily and has the purpose of misleading the readers in that the Torah speaks of historical Palestine. Because of the way this name is written in Hebrew (ha-Yeriden), even the late Prof. Kamal Salibi was doubtful thinking that the word means the great land fissure. This is an extremely important notice, lacking, though, enough proof, because the name carries other deeper indications than the great water or land fissure. Although the Torah does not refer to it as a river, and there is no linguistic, cultural or geographic proof that supports this conception, the idea of the existence of ancient Israelite tribes that had been granted by Moses the right of appropriating all the east and the west of Jordan, this narrative has been cunningly used to grab Arab land, like the case of the Syrian Golan Heights that are claimed to have been mentioned in the Torah. This is nothing but sheer misleading.[16]The presence of a few Israelite tribes to whom Moses had granted territories in the west and the east of Jordan, or throughout the Palestinian west bank, is a model orientalist counterfeiting that has been used for revealing the so-called holy historical roots of the alleged religious right related to Moses.

What is interesting in the name "ha-Yeriden" when it is read as "al-Urdun" (Jordan), meaning the country and the river, is that in no way does it reveal the places and the names mentioned in the texts, because none of the names of the tribes, the mountains or the valleys are there to the west of River Jordan. To simplify things to the none-specialized reader, I shall

16 We had written about the Golan Height is detail in our book, *Imagined Palestine*, *ibid*.

summarize whatever was written in this part of the book in the following way:

1. The Torah's texts speak about two names, the adherents of the Torah allege that they refer to River Jordan, namely al-Ardam (ha-Yerideem), which is Wadi al-Aju'd in Lahaj, southwest of Sanaa, and al-Yerdin (ha-Yeriden), which is Wadi Mour that springs from al-Mahweeth, north of Sanaa, passing by al-Hudaydah and running into the Red Sea. As we shall also prove later, a discreditable playing in the old religious text had occurred, because the Torah did not know neither Jordan nor Palestine nor Wadi Arabah.

2. If, for the sake of argument, we accept this allegation, we have to find a justification for the disappearance of the mountains and the valleys in the description of River Jordan, while we find them in the same names high and thriving until today in describing the Yemeni al-Yerdin Valley.

3. Nowhere in Palestine is there a mountain called Yeriho or Ariha (Jericho) that had fallen in the hands of Joshua, where some Israelite tribes had resided. No linguistic or geographic remnants have been found to confirm their existence in this place. Astonishingly, Ariha (Jericho) of Palestine is located at the lowest point below sea level, while the Torah mentions a mountain called Yeriho. Where then have the mountains, the valleys and the tribes suddenly disappeared?

4. Therefore, the veritable possibility for explaining all this ambiguity is that the Torah speaks about places located in another geography, which certainly is not that of old Palestine. One of these places is Wadi al-Ardam, which, as we shall show, is one of the Yemeni renowned valleys in the old history, which

is called today Wadi al-Aju‘d, after the name of the tribe that has resided there. There is also Wadi al-Yerdin, where the extinct Yemeni tribe Yerd ibn Mihlaeel had resided. As the theory of this book is based on the concept that the Torah had never spoken about River Jordan, and that the Sons of Israel had never reached this place, and they had never crossed this river to Palestine, and they had never conquered Jericho, and they had never entered Jerusalem from this city, and they had never known Arab al-Quds, and that whatever has been written or said in this sense is consequent to a wrong and confused reading of the Torah, I preferred, before continuing my analysis of the rest of the texts related to the crossing, to commence by clarifying all this only through re-building the Torah’s text itself about the Israelite tribes residing in the west of al-Yerdin.

I shall present here a full description of what is known as the Torah’s Urdun. This is Wadi Mour, the greatest of Yemeni valleys (together with Mizab Tihamah – Tihamah Water Ditch), according to al-Hamadani. This valley has nothing to do with Wadi al-Ardam in Lahaj, nor with River Jordan in south Syria.

Wadi Mour, which is River Jordan of the Torah, starts flowing from Mount al-Muthallath in Saadah Governorate, in Yemen. Its water flows abundantly from various mountains in Yemen, like Hajja, Kahlan, A‘far, al-Ashmur, Mount Musawwar and al-Dhafeer, running into Sharas Valley. Part of its water originates from al-Jumaymah, Wadi La‘ah, Wadi Shahar and Wadi Khaifah. All this water gather together in a great stream called Wadi Mour, and then it is joined by the water of Wadi Akhraf, Sufyan, al-U‘baysah, al-Qaflah, Sahar and Saqayn that originates in Saadah. At last it mixes with the waters descending from al-U‘saymat, A‘thr, Haboor, Dhulaymah of I‘mran and al-Jumaymah. After that it flows towards spacious lands in

the Directorate of al-Zahra and al-Lahya, both belonging to al-Hudayda, and then it runs into the Red Sea. From this description, it is clear that Wadi Mour (ha-Yeriden, which means affluent water), in its path from Saadah, passes by a number of governorates before it runs into the Red Sea. Indeed, it cleaves the Yemeni soil longitudinally east-west, as shown in the list below and exactly as in the Torah's description. All the names mentioned in this description have been mentioned in the Torah as names of places appropriated by the tribes of Israel to the east and the west of the river. (Arabs used to call the valleys' water a river – *Nahr*.) Interestingly, we find the name Yared – Yaredin for a mountain that is still there today in the same location in the Governorate of Taez. Take the following discovery:

Thanks to its marvelous geographic location, the Governorate of Rima is one of the most beautiful places in Yemen, being in the center of the western series of mountains between 14.63 and 14.88 degrees north and 43.05 and 44 degrees east. It enjoys a fascinating geographic nature of fertile valleys, plateaus and mountainous heights, the most beautiful of which is Mount Yerid – Yeriden that is mentioned in the Torah. At approximately 2,850 meters above sea level, it is part of the Directorate of Kasma. The visitor, sitting in a room or standing over the roof of a house on the top of one of the high mountains in the Governorate of Rima, can see to the west the city of al-Hudaydah, the Red Sea and the rest of the cities and regions in Tihama. One can also see the historical Yemeni ports, like al-Makha and Muwazze', the historical al-Maqatra Fortress and Mount Sabr in the Governorate of Taez. At night, one can see the lights of the capital city of Sanaa.

This is Mount Yerid (Yeriden) where Yerid ibn Mahlaeel Tribe had resided near the banks of that great valley and mountain.

This is the valley that cleaves the Yemeni soil east and west. The name, ha-Yeriden is the religious name of Wadi Mour. As we have seen, it takes its path from Saadah to al-Mahweeth and then runs to the Red Sea, passing through a number of Yemeni regions today, dividing the soil east and west. One may imagine how great that valley is and the meaning of its holiness on the part of its old inhabitants.

| West of the River | East of the River` |
|---|---|
| Al-Mahra | Saada – al-Mahweeth |
| Hadramout | Hajja |
| Shibwa | I‘mran |
| Al-Jawf | Sanaa |
| Abyan | Rima |
| Aden | Al-Hudaydah |
| Lahaj | Taez |
| Al-Dhale‘ | |
| Al-Baydhaa | |
| Maareb | |
| Ibb | |
| Thamar | |

# Chapter Two

***The Israelite Tribes and the Tribes of Yemen***

Let us start form the following embarrassing question: who is the *Sibt* (grandchild) of Gad – Jad? Who is Reuben? Where did the name Benjamin (Ben Yamen) come from? Who are the Asheeriyyoun? Who is the grandchild of Yashkur – Yaskur? What about Zobolon, Manasseh and Yusef? Are these real names the existence of which can be imagined as historical human groups that were linked in a branching family hierarchy known as "*Asbat*" (plural of *Sibt*)?[17]Where can we find the remnants of those groups of people? We shall start with the Sibt of Ben Yamen (Benjamin). It is clear that the name has a close connection with the name "Yamen." This name, as we had shown in our work, *Imagined Palestine*, has a connection with a renowned place Mount Yamen in Aden. It is also the name of a strong fortress in Taez called Yamen Fortress, which was inhabited by a group of people called Bani Yamen (Benyamin). The late Prof. Kanmal Salibi had noticed a poetic verse by the pre-Islamic poet, Tarfa ib al-A'bd that goes:

17 The idea of the existence of *Sibt*, as a precursor of the tribe, known in anthropology as the primitive precursor, which is a word that was used in Yemen, the linguistic and social remnants of which is still there. They still use the Arabic expression exactly as the anthropologists do regarding the long pastoral period that all the nomadic societies had lived. Originally *al-sibt* is the camel's calf and then it earned the meaning of the daughter's child.

*Al-Malikyyah's riding animal in the morning*

*Looks like a ship in the plain at Dad*

*They belong to the ships of A'doula or Ben Yamen*

*Sometimes driven rightly or astray by this navigator*

Prof. Salibi presumed that Ben Yamen was the same Ben Yemen in that pre-Islamic poem. It is an acceptable and a deep assumption; yet we think that the name has to do with the mountainous fortress, because it was mentioned in Musnad's inscriptions as a name of a king and a particular tribal group. According to an inscription of the group "*Jam 616*",[18] its history goes back to the time of Saba and Thu Ridan Kingdome in the 3rd century AD, the time of the King Nasha Karb Yamen-Yahrahb, King of Saba and Thu Ridan and the son of King Eel Sharh Yahdhub and Yazel Bayn, for we find that the name appears as the name of a king in the form Yamen. In another inscription that records the history of a military campaign dispatched by King Nasha Karb Yamen to discipline a number of tribes that had tried to rebel against his authority, the same name was mentioned together with names of the following tribes: Ab Aws, Ada', Hakam,, Hadlan, Ghamed, Kahal, Ahlani, Jadeela, Haram, Hajar Lamd and Awam. These are names of tribes that had been named after their old gods and forefathers. It is certain that the date of the inscription goes back to the time of King Shammar Yahra'sh, king of Saba and Thu Ridan in the first half of the third century AD. It records the history of the rise of al-Qeel (tribe chief) Shafa't Ashu' and his son Zayed Yamen of Hamadan Tribe after

18 Dr. M.A. al-Aroosi, "جازان في المصادر التاريخية القديمة" (Jazan in the ancient Historical Sources): the inscription was discovered in Balqees Sanctuary (Temple of the Queen of Saba) in Maareb Governorate. It is a mica stone adjacent to the Queen's temple.

their victorious return from a few raids, like Raid Tadhen against A'k Tribe and another raid against the tribes of Wadi I'tud and Mount Rima.[19] All this supports the idea that the name Yamen was that of a patriarch worshipped by a group of people who were called after his name: Sons of Yamen (al-Ameen) whose name was mentioned as an Israelite tribe (*Sibt*); it is also the name of a place in another parallel version, Yamnah,. What does all this mean? We have archeological proofs that these people had lived in Taez on a mountain that still carries their name today and that they had lived in a great fortress known as Yameen Fortress. Unfortunately, some pedantic linguists had written it as Yumayn, which is baseless, for the right name is Yameen – Ameen, which, in our opinion, is the name of the ancient god that the said people had worshipped and had been named after him. The said fortress is located at Yashmot, as named by the Torah. Today, in al-Shamateen Directorate the said fortress stands on the peak of the mountain at a seclusion (*U'zlah*) called al-A'za-i'z, which overlooks the adjacent regions like al-Asabeh and al-Quraysha (Qurays in the Torah). This is marvelous, indeed. Here is the geographic space that includes the fortress, the mountain and the other spaces mentioned in the Torah. According to the information on the fortress in the comprehensive Yemeni guide, the fortress is "one of the most important defensive castles against attacks."

Historical events had also proved that. The same thing applies to the rest of the *Asbat* (tribes), for they had borrowed their names from places and gods, like the case with the Israelite *Sibt* Yussef (יוסף), which we believe to be the name of the ancient pagan god Isaf, mentioned in the Torah as the clerical name,

19 Wadi I'tud is located to the north of Jazan, connecting Jazan with Abha and the main road that passes parallel to the valley and extending to the borders of Khamees Mushayt city.

Asaf. This is the same doleful god, the guardian of water, known in the pre-Islamic age as Isaf and Naela. Let us remember that Isaf had an icon at the Kaabah near the well of Zamzam.

Regarding the name of Ibn Yamen in the poem of Tarfa ibn al-Abd, I must refer to the following:

The name A'douli (Adulis) had been mentioned as an Ethiopian port in some old geographic Greek texts, some of which belong to the Greek geographer Plenius, together with mentioning the Kingdom of Aksum - Axum (also in *Navigating in the Red Sea – Periplus of the Eritrean Sea*, by an unknown Egyptian traveler at the turn of the second century AD) He had described Adulis Port south of Musawa as an ivory market. In this sense, Plenius thought that this port at that time was one of the most important ports of the Red Sea. The inscriptions written in the Ja'zi and Greek languages, as well as those of Saba, show the rise of this kingdom in the second century AD and the crossing of the Red Sea to the Arabian south by the Aksumites in the last quarter of that century. All this mean that the ships of Bani Yamen used to navigate in the Red Sea together with those sailing from the Ethiopian port of Adulis.

Before analyzing all these names and revealing the possibilities of their existence as historical figures, we have first to make a new approach to some of them, like the name of the Israelite *Sibt* Gad, asking who he is and whence its name had originated. Our purpose is to help in building a study example for the none-specialized readers to have a deeper understanding of the Torah's stories. Secondly, we should link this approach with our knowledge of the names of the Yemeni tribes. In fact, the Torah's editors have not the slightest idea about the meaning of the name Gad nor about its origin. None of the translators

of the Hebrew text have information of a linguistic value that may contribute to solving the riddle of the name. It goes without saying that none of the orientalist historians possesses the capability of offering an acceptable help in this respect. The names of the Israelite *Asbat* (tribes) deserve a separate study, which is what we shall do here. Let us remember in the first place that the Yemenis reserve[20] in their heritage a respected image of the king Thou Jadd (Jaden) as a legendary hero. But they do not have what confirms the historicity of this figure, except what had been written by the Yemeni genealogists. In another inscription in the collection of Conti Rossini[21] dating back to the third century AD, it is mentioned that Abu-Karb thou Sardad,[22] one of the king's knights, had waged numerous raids against a number of mutinous tribes of Wadi Dhamad, namely the tribes of Sahra – Sahrat, Deewat, Sahar and Hurra. He had crushed and chased them up to Mount al-A'kwatayn. On the other hand, we must admit the fact that the name had been mentioned in other Musnad inscriptions and that some places in Yemen still carry some reminiscences of him. We can also find elements of this name in the name of the city of Jeddah in Saudi Arabia on the Red Sea coast that is connected with Yemen. In addition, one can find elements of the same name in an inscription called Nar/Jadd, which had been found by archeologists and had given rise to a hot discussion until today. At last, we can find the same name in connection with the Yemeni Khawlan Tribe, known as Khawlan Jadd – Jadan, called by the *al-khabar* narrators Khawlan al-Ajdud.

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20 The poet Alqama ibn thee Jadan (719 AD) belongs to the the clan of thee Jadan of Himyar, as differentiated from the king Alqamah ibn thee Qeefan. He was known as Alqama al-Matmoos, for being blind. He was also known as Nawwahat Himyar, because of his crying on the ruins of his relatives in his poetry. The origin if the name of Jadan is Jad, and the "n" is a local extinct Yemeni dialect.

21 Al-Aroosi, *ibid*.

22 Compare it with Sard in the Torah and the Jewish name Sareed.

Khawlan (Jadadan) in al-Musnad inscriptions has its territories in the region extending from Umm Layla Mountain to the north until the southwest of Saada. It is known today as Khawlan and has become one of the directorates of Sanaa. Its ancient habitations had occupied a large region of the governorate of Saada. As Khawlan Jadadan, i.e. Jad – al-Jad, inhabits identical places in description and names with those where the Israelite *Sibt* Gad/Jad had resided, which is what we shall prove, it is certain that the rule of scientific study and objective analysis forces us to take these data to our consideration.

Following is the text of this inscription (Bafaqih 44: Jam 601: Balqees Sanctuary, Maareb):[23]

> *"By himself, he had honored his vow to the god Almaqa his slave Ilram in two raids that he had waged in the territory of Khawlan Jad (al-Ajdud)."*

This datum initially confirms to us that the name of Khwlan was linked with the title Jad, and that it was known with it in the past. But we also know that worshipping the ancestors was known in history. Therefore, does the name refer to the tribe's god that the said tribe had carried as its title and to which it had been affiliated?

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23 Bafaqih, Muhammad Abd-al-Qader, et al, , *Mukhtarat min al Nuqoosh al-Yamaniyya al-Qadeemah (Selections from Old Yemeni Inscriptions)*, Tunis: Arab Organization for Culture and Sciences, 1985, p. 472. See also: *Tarikh al-Yaman al-Qadeem (Old History of Yemen)*, Arab Establishment for Studies, 1985. See also: M.A. al-Iryani, *Nuqoosh Musnadiyya wa Ta'liqat (Musnad Inscriptions and Comments)*, Sanaa: Yemeni Center for Studies and Research, 1990.

Dr. Jawad Ali[24]had noticed this possibility and presumed the existence of a relationship between the name Jad and that of the Israelite Sibt Gad/Jad. In the Nabatean writings, there is reference to him as Jada, the remnants of which are found in the Arab names Abd Jad and Abd al-Jadd. The Thamudic texts had also preserved the names of a number of gods, one of which is the god called Jad Hadad. This Jad is a god that was known at the Sons of Iram and the northern Arabs. It is the god of luck and happiness to them. Contrary to the opinion of Jawad Ali and others, I think that the name of the great Assyrian king, Nebuchadnezzar, whose name used to be written by the ancient Arabs as Bakht-Nassar (bakht meaning luck), has a link with worshipping the god of luck, because "nebu" means appear, that is related with "ibn" (son), thus he is the son of the god of luck. In the colloquial Iraqi Arabic, the word "bakht" means the great grandfather. In Greek, jad means luck. This word was given to such places as Ba'l Jad and Majdal Jad. As for the god Jadat, Jawad Ali thinks that it is mostly a goddess, for having the feminine "t" at the end of the name.[25]Compare this with the name of the city of Jeddah. One of the Safawis' gods was Jad Dhayf. The Safawis had used the name Jad A'wadh as Hajad A'wadh in a text preserved in the museum of Damascus (Damas 1312), together with the names of the two gods, Sha' Haqom and Shi' Haqom. In this sense, one can make an initial comparison between the name of Yosha' and Sha' and Shi' as the name of

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24 Jawad Ali, *al-Mufassal fi Tarikh al-A'rab Qabl al-Islam* (*Detailed Pre-Islamic Arab History*). (Beirut: Dar al-Ilm, Vol. 3, 1980), p. 737. It is the name of a god that was worshipped by many peoples, like Bani Iram, northern and southern Arabs and the Assyrians. It was called by the Assyrians and the Babylonians Raman. They worshipped him by effect of the western Bani Iram. Raman represents Rimmon, as in the Torah. Rimmon Hadadan is the god of air, thunder and tempests. From this name the name Binhadad in the Torah was derived. There must be a connection between this god and the god Jad, as Jad Hadad had appeared in numerous Thamudi writings.

25 Jawad Ali, *ibid*, Vol. 3, Chapter 70, p. 738.

an ancient god. Jawad Ali had also noticed tha Jad A‘wth is a well-known god for the Safawis. René Desau thinks that the word A‘wth - A‘weeth is related to a clan or a tribe that used to worship the god Jad, whose custodians belonged to this tribe, hence being known as Jad A‘wth and Jad A‘weeth. We believe that this is a precise understanding, for until today, we find the name of this god in Syria in the same name: Kufr A‘weed, i.e. the village of the god A‘weed in the governorate of Idlib.

Recently, the name A‘weed was mentioned a lot in the media together with disturbances that had taken place there. The name of the god Jad Dhayf – Jad Dhaf was mentioned in a number of Safawi writings that had been discovered in Jordan, where the name of a goddess, Hajad A‘wth (ha-Jad A‘wth) was also mentioned.

These initial data indicate that the name Jadd is related to an ancient idol that was worshiped by the ancient Arab tribes in the habit of sanctifying and worshipping the forefathers. As the only tribe that had carried his name had been a Yemeni tribe and had been known with him, namely Khawlan Jadd, it may be an offspring of the Israelite Sibt (Gad)Jadd - Jad. Now, how can we be sure of this probability? We know from the Torah’s texts, especially the Book of Joshua, that (Gad) Jadd – Jad had lived with the Asheeris and with the tribes of A‘kk, Kana‘n and Sibt bin Yamen. Al-Hamadani’s texts, as well as the Arab *khabar* narrators clearly tell us that the Asha‘ris had lived with A‘kk on the coast together with Bani Kinanah. What is interesting is that many Musnad inscriptions had recorded battles against the tribe of A‘kk, as mentioned in the Torah. A‘kk had given its name to Wadi A‘kko in Yemen and to the city of A‘kka (Acre) in Palestine. Some inscriptions had mentioned A‘kk together with the tribes of Asha’r (Asheer in the Torah) in the coast of Bani Kinanah on

the Red Sea. The name Asha'r is mentioned as a name of a king: Sha'r – Awtar. We believe it to be the god of religious rituals. Because of all this, we think that the name of Sibt (Gad) Jad is related to the title of the Arab Yemeni tribe Khawlan that used to be known in the past by the name of Jad. Sibt Manasseh (מנשה) is al-Nasaa that had been known to the Arabian pre-Islamic tribes as the remaining Jewish rabbis who had been working with al-Nasee that was prohibited by Islam. al-Nasee is a system based on complicated mathematical calculations for determining the annual calendar, albeit by playing with the chronology of the religious occasions. Those people had worshipped the god of time (or the Greek god Chronus), whom they had served in regulating the forms of time calendar by advancing and delaying the inviolable months. They had been named after their god Manassah.

In this context, we find the name of Sumi' (Samo'n - Shamo'n or Simon) as a Yemeni tribe that had worshipped the god called Almaqat, whom we believe to be the ancient god called Mecca. Sibt Sumi' (Samo'n) had migrated to the north, which makes us consider the Arab narratives regarding Ishmael's traveling to the north and his arrival in Mecca, where he and Ibrahim (Abraham) had built the Ka'bah. The temple of this tribe is located on the peak of Mount Riyam in the region of Arhab north of Sanaa. In that mountain, which was famous from the pre-Islamic ages, the city of Atwa is located. The inscriptions had named this city as Hajran – Atotam. The inscription RES. 4176, discovered over a rock in the mountain, gives us an amazing description of the pilgrimage rituals with the prohibited acts. The first kind of the pilgrimage rituals, which were like *ihram* rituals today, appeared in Maareb. Those rituals were performed for al-Maqat, the god of Saba, in Awam (أوام) Temple, the

sanctuary of Balqis, in a specific month of the year called "th a b h I" (ذ أ ب هـ ي) . It is interesting that the Zamzamis are still there in Yemen with their old Torah's name. In the Directorate of Yafi', governorate of Lahaj, there are numerous heights and mountains that are inhabited by tribes known with this name, in addition to mountainous seclusions with the same name, like al-Zamzami clan of Hashed and al-Zamzami tribe that inhabits the region of al-A'wd. There is also Uzlat al-Zamazem. This deeply-rooted tribe is one of the first tribes that had inhabited al-A'wd in the governorate of I'mran. The same applies to the name Yaskur – Yashkur in the Torah, which is the name of the Yemeni tribe Yashkur – Yaskur. The writings of Hadhramawt had revealed that a number of the Makrubis had governed the people of Hadhramawt, before becoming a kingdom. Philby of Arabia had recorded some of them in his list of rulers. They had carried the name of the supreme god Yashkur – Yaskur, among which is al-Mukrab Yaskur Eel Yahra'sh ibn Ab Yasa' - Yaskur Eel Yahra'sh ibn Yasa'. Until today, there is in the directorate of Arhab, governorate of Sanaa, an Uzalah called Uzalat Shaker, which is part of the village of Bosan. The purpose of this study example is to clarify the relationship between the existence of groups of people, figures and heroes and the existence of ancient paganism and that the origin of these names is not considered a proof of their existence as real historical figures. The fact is that the groups who came later and adopted their names had done so in the context of their religious beliefs, like A'bbad al-Ilah al-Ameen (the faithful worshipper of the god), A'bbad al-Maa (worshipper of water), which are the Zamzamis who were mentioned in the Torah, and A'bbad al-Dahr (worshipper of time), etc. With the appearance of Moses' Shareea' (law) (the law of the savior Massah – Masha), however, those had broken off from paganism, while other groups had remained attached to

their old pagan faith, like A'bbad al-Falas – Falashteem, which is the god of the umbilicus. Those have no relationship with the Palestinians, as the orientalist reading claims. They are rather pagan tribes from Tayy who were known to the pre-Islamic Arabs and whose god had been described in details by Ibn al-Kalbi.

### *Al-Yerdin and the Mandaeism Sabii Religion*

The holy book of the Mandaeism Sabiis, known as Kanza Rabba[26] had recorded the name ha-Yeridin in the same way it is recorded in the Torah, as the name of a holy celestial river. As the Mandaeism is a baptist religion that preceded Christianity and Judaism,[27] and its followers perform the rituals of baptism and submersion in the river, it had developed its religious concepts of the Yeridin as not being one real river, but rather rivers the number of which is 360 celestial rivers with the same number on earth, with whose water human beings are supposed to wash and get purified of their sins. This is the origin of the ablution ritual in Islam. We can see the remnants of this ritual in south Iraq, where the Sabiis perform the ritual of religious cleansing in the small rivers there, strictly applying the ablution traditions, a ritual that we also see in India. In their prayers, the Sabiis pronounce the name of this river as *Yeridna*. Yerid is the origin of this name, while the "n" is a Yemeni dialect called al-Kulaa', according to the Yemeni *miklaf* whose inhabitants are known for adding the letter "n" at the end of the words, like calling Sanaa as Sanaan, Aden as Adenen and Arab as Araben. Perhaps the holiness of this name in the religions

26 Kanza Rabba is name of the holy book of the Mandaeans. It means the great treasure. The word *kanza* is given to the human mind, which called *kanza taqna*, the perfect treasure. *Rabba* in Arabic, Assyrian and Hebrew languages means great or profound.

27 A theory goes that the Mandaeism religion is the oldest monotheistic religion in history. It is possible that it roots back to worshipping the stars in Arabia and Yemen.

that had preceded Judaism goes back to the belief that Yerid is the father of Akhnokh (Prophet Idrees in Islam who was the first man to build ships and to bring wisdom). The ancient Arabs had claimed that Yerid is the superior father of a tribe with this name. The Yemenis had called Wadi Mour, the great Tihama spring, with the name Yerid. It is clear that the word is closely linked to water, for in Arabic the word *wird* ( ورد - مورد ) means water stream. Lately, a new Musnad inscription has been discovered with a special importance in depicting the real geography of the Torah and has a relationship with the name of Wadi Mour that is mentioned in the Torah in the same name. According to Prof. Yusuf Muhammad Abdulla, professor of archeology and inscriptions at the University of Sanaa. The British archeological commission in al-Hudayda, Yemen, which is the one that had discovered the said inscription at an archeological site called al-Waqer (Waqar in the Torah) had noticed the importance of the inscription because of its reference to very old names, valleys and places. The inscription tells of the decision of a Yemeni king to exempt some tribes of taxes. It is similar to the inscription that was discovered in Wadi Hadhur.

The appearance of Wadi Mour in the Musnad inscriptions and in the Torah as a great valley in Tihamah,[28] together with Jeezan – Jazan, confirms the symbolic value of water that had enjoyed a special holiness, because Mour is not one of the familiar valleys, but rather one of the greatest. This is what justifies a tribe with the name of Yerid – Yarid ibn Mahlaeel in residing at its banks. Here, I wish to pinpoint that the ancient Yemeni dialect, like in Hebrew, replaces the letter “th” with an “s” or an “sh”, like in Yasu‘ - Yashu‘. This is the god of Hamadan and the rest of the Yemenis.

28 Jazan here is Jazan of al-Suhool region, between Ta‘u and Ibb today. This, in our opinion, is the one mentioned in the Torah as Jathan of the land of Egypt.

The faith of sanctifying water is a very old one. We may find its expressions in many religious stories, like throwing the infant Moses in the river, throwing Yusuf (Joseph) in the well, death of Tammuz and his resurrection from the river, as well as the legend of the Egyptian Izirus who had been thrown in the Nile,[29] etc. The old Arab authors had imagined the kinship of Yarid as the following. According to Ibn Hazm:[30] "When Mihlal became sixty five years old, he had a son called Yarid. According to all the Christians, when Mihlal became 165 years old, he had a son called Yarid. Both sects agreed that Yarid had begotten Khanukh." According to Ibn al-Atheer:[31] "Yarid ibn Mihlaeel was born 460 years after Adam's birthday. In his time, the icons were made and people left Islam. According to Ibn Ishaaq, "Yarid got married to Barkata daughter of al-Darmaseel ibn Mahweel ibn Khanukh ibn Qeen ibn Adam when he was 162 years old and she gave birth to Khanukh", i.e. Prophet Idrees, the first human being who was granted prophecy, the first who wrote with a pen and the first who mastered the sciences of astrology and arithmetic. The Greek wise men call him Hurmus the wise man. After the birth of Idrees, Yarid lived 800 years, during which time he had sons and daughters." Accrding to al-Tabari,[32] "Yarid, in whose time the icons were made, is the son of Mihlaeel ibn Qeenan ibn Anoosh ibn Sheeth – Hibat Allah ibn Adam, peace be upon him. He was his father's caretaker after Habeel was killed." According to Ibn al-Kalbi,[33] "He is Yarid son of Mihlaeel ibn Qeenan." According to Ibn Ussaybia,[34]

29 Regarding these legends, see our work Yusuf wa al-Beer (*Joaeph and the Well*), also *al-Manahah al-A'theema (The Great Lamentation)*, two sources in the bibliography.
30 Ibn Haz, *al-Fassl fi al-Milal wa al-Ahwaa wa al-Nihal*. 1/126.
31 Ibn al-Atheer, *al-Kamel fi al-Tareekh*. 1/21.
32 Al-Tabari, *Tareekh al-Rusul wa al-Mulook*. 1/383.
33 Ibn al-Kalbi, *al-Asnam*, 1/12.
34 Ibn Abi Ysaybi'a, *U'un al-Anbaa fi Tabaqat al-Atibbaa*, 1/16.

“Yarid is son of Mihlaeel ibn Qeenan ibn Anoosh ibn Sheeth ibn Adam.”

Consequent to this, we have the following to say: the origin of the name Yerid – Yeriden is that of a superior holy father who was worshipped by the Yemeni Arabian tribes and his existence had been akin to the Great Flood and building of ships. His name was Yarid and he was left at a great water place and by lapse of time he enjoyed a special holiness. The word Yariden has a religious connotation as it refers to the flowing holy water. With time, however, the word stopped referring to the ancient god as much as it had acquired the meaning of water flowing from the high mountains and cleaving the earth into two halves: east and west of the water. The celestial Yeriden had become an earthly one where sin can be washed away the whole year round. In this interesting mythological image, we find all the necessary elements for seeing A‘aber[35] being an embodiment of the personality of Noah and his son.[36] Let us notice that the allegations about a relationship between his name and the crossing of the river borrow their initial elements from this symbolic similarity between the personalities of Noah and A‘aber, for both of them had crossed the great holy water (the holy Yeriden). As the name had appeared in the books of Mandaeism Sabiis long time before the appearance of Judaism, and baptism in its holy water was a basic element in that religion, it is natural for us to look closely into the indicative and functional relation of the name, albeit only from the historic frame through which the Christian belief in baptism had developed. Contrary to the claim in some publications that are mostly written in an orientalist spirit, Sabaism is not derived from the Arabic root Saba’ (صبأ)

35 A‘ber in Arabic means the crosser. [the translator]

36 We notice in the Quran that Noah’s son was a sinner when he refused to accept his father’s command.

meaning break away from one's faith. It is rather derived from the Mandaeism root *masab – masbata* meaning submerge. Masbata is the ritual of purity or baptism. The letter "m" in the beginning of the word must refer us to the Himyari "m" used as a definite article. Therefore, there is an organic relationship between the ritual of baptism and the name of this religion, where the meaning of Sabaism is akin to the ancient Mandaeism baptism that had preceded both Judaism and Christianity. Sabaism is in fact the popular name of Mandaeanism, which means knowledge (Gnosticism). *Sabagh* also means dying or coloring. In the Holy Quran, there is a verse that goes: "We take on Allah's dye. And who has a better dye than Allah's? Him will we worship."[37] *Masbata* is not a ritual expression of bodily purification; it is the total sign and the most expressive of the meaning of spiritual purity, because the relationship with the world of Light – which is the most important angle of Mandaeanism – will not be completed without submerging in al-Yerdina. By means of this ritual, the faithful shall ascend to the world of spiritual knowledge, the supreme lightness. In the Mandaeism mythology, al-Yerdina and the ritual of cleansing (*Masbata*) appear as two celestial expressions. The angel Hebel Zewa was the first who had brought them to the earth when he baptized (painted) Adam, the first man. In this context, we must notice that Yerdina (ha-Yerdin) means the flowing or the living water, the celestial water that had sprung out of a vague place in the world of Light before being brought by the angels to the inhabitants of the earth. This completely clarifies the significance behind the insistence of the Arab narrators of *khabar* in the Islamic and pre-Islamic periods on saying that Yarid had lived in the time of the Great Flood, according to al-Tabari.

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37 The Holy Quran, Suraht al-Baqarah (The Cow). Verse 138.

Under the influence of Mandaeanism and its astounding concept of the holy celestial river, Yerdina, descending from Heaven to the earth and becoming an earthly river, the ancient people had imagined Yarid as a supreme worshipped patriarch who had begotten human beings. What does this turning in the developmental path of the old philosophical concept mean? When we notice that the essence of al-Yedina concept stands on the basis of its being part of the most central of the elements of the first creation among the rest of ancient philosophical ideas about creation, it means that the legend of the Great Flood must be in this case a parallel earthly idea. For as man had emanated from the great celestial flowing water, Yerdina, the emanation of man from the heart of the earthly flood – which is related to the Torah in the creation – will become symbolically and objectively equivalent to the first creation in Heaven. Al-Yerdina, after being brought by the angel, has become, therefore, a holy earthly river that gets its power of flowing and continuity from the celestial Yerdina that grants it the quality of life and continuity. From the Mandaeism ritual of baptism, it is understood that the holiness of water is related to its flowing, for not every water is holy. This is a delicate distinction that defines strict borders between holiness and impurity. The flowing water (i.e. al-Yeriden) alone has the quality of life and continuity. Also in Mandaeism, the religious term Mia Hayy (living water), is used to express this concept indicating that baptism is akin to the flowing water (the rivers), but not to any other water. Perhaps the Mandaean Lotergies that had expressed this concept that is still being repeated in the religious prayers in southern Iraq strongly expresses the meaning of the continuous glorification of the living water:

*Blessed and glorified is al-Athri*[38]

*Who inhabits al-Yerdina*

This wonderful religious prayer includes all the necessary dimensions for forming a marvelous imagination about the relationship of man with ha-Yeriden. Descending into it for the sake of purity, or crossing it and bathing in it to wash away sin, brings back the baptized to his old none-human origin as a pure luminous Athri, i.e. an angel that had descended from Heaven. To confirm the relationship of the Sabais with Yemen, it is important to notice the verb *mashbi – yasheb*, (*yesheb* in Hebrew and *yatheb* in Arabic), meaning to jump, to sit, to descend.

In this sense, crossing Jordan has a special holiness in the Jewish and Christian faiths, for it is a re-creation of man as an angel. The prevailing mythological and religious concept of the holiness of water as a source not only of purity, but of life too, is one of the oldest human concepts.[39] From the heart of this central concept in the human mind, the legend of crossing the water had emanated. It is going past water to the terra firma as in the legend of the great flood when Noah, together with his people and other creatures, had crossed towards the terra firma evading the terror of torrential water. It is also like the legend of throwing Moses in a basket into the Nile, and like in the legend of Jonas who was swallowed by the whale that crossed with him the sea and disgorged him into the terra firma. It is also similar to the Christian faith regarding Jesus walking over the water; in addition to other legends. As this water was originally celestial, i.e. ha-Yeriden, which is 360 rivers, the great legend of A'aber had appeared akin to all legends regarding water.

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38 Athri is a luminous being of the worlds of light. Every Athra must be an angel.

39 The verse in the holy Quran is an example: "We made every living thing of water." ( وجعلنا من الماء كل شي حي. )

From the heart of this legend came the image of the hero who became the great grandfather of the ancient Arab peoples - wrongly called Semitic people.[40] Various people and tribes have disputed among themselves in claiming their kinship to him, which is what one can see in the dispute between the A'dnanis and the Qahtanis, where the Qahtanis claim their kinship to A'aber, perhaps claiming that Qahtan is A'aber himself. As water is the source of every living thing, according to the Holy Quran, A'aber had been born from the heart of a mythological concept that sanctifies water. He was thought of as the first one who had crossed the celestial ha-Yeriden to the terra firma, i.e. the earth. His human birth, however, when he became human after crossing the water, is what made the various tribes dispute about their kinship to him turning him into a human being, not an Athari one, as in the Mandaeism religion. this is the meaning of baptism with water in Christianity, for water alone is what turns the holy infant into a human being, i.e. making him embody the first crossing of A'aber. This is precisely the real significance of the Biblical concept of Moses cleaving the water with his stick. It is the same crossing concept repeated in all ancient religions and faiths. We may find in the Pharaonic book of the dead a parallel concept about the dead crossing to the underworld, where they cross the horrible seas and rivers on boats led by guides. This means that, by this journey, they look for having another life, a resurrection. We believe that Mandaeism is older than Judaism and it was born in Yemen, not anywhere else. The word *Mandi* is taken from the Irami root, as Prof. Salibi had rightly stated, because it is connected to Iram, not to Aram, as in the Arabic version of the Old Testament, meaning knowledge or

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40 Schloster had built the idea of his terminology, the Semitic peoples, on a biblical basis, claiming the existence of a historical figure from whom the various pedigrees had branched off,

Gnosticism. Sabiism is the popular name that had been given to the followers of this ancient monotheistic religion. Many Arab scholars were mistaken in explaining the meaning of the name by returning its root to the Arabic word *Saba* (صبأ), meaning exit, i.e. breaking away from religion.

This is certainly wrong, because the name has an organic link with the Hebrew word Sabaot (צבאות)., which means stars. (In another context it means soldiers.) This takes us back to see the effect of worshipping stars in Yemen on the Gnostic Mandaeism philosophy, as the archeological inscriptions, artifacts, records and ruins of temples show. Analyzing the three-letter name *saba* from a semantic point of view with that in Arabic *saba* (صبأ) and with that in Hebrew *sabaot* (צבאות), will totally prove that the meaning is the same: exit, emerge, relieve, which is what emphasizes the religious dimension of the word.

There is another version of *saba* in the Musnad inscriptions, namely *Sab-at* (سبأت) , which seems closer to the Yemeni version by adding the letter "t" and to the Hebrew version *sabaot* (צבאות) . It is most likely that the popular Sabaism had spread in Iraq and Harran – the Euphrates Island in Syria, by effect of a great migration that had led some Yemeni tribes to these places. What attracts one's attention in the context of this conception is that the pre-Islamic narrators of *khabar* had confirmed that the Mandaeism *qibla* at the commencement of that religion in Yemen was to the north, i.e. to the Ka'abah that was considered Saturn's house. Describing the stars worshipping houses, al-Muqrizi[41] had noticed that "The temples in the old time were twelve: that of the first reason, that of the brain, that of politics, that of the image and that of the ego. These five temples

41 Al-Muqrizi, *al-Mawa'idh wa al-I'tibar*, Vol. 1, 45/167.

were round and the sixth, i.e. that of Saturn, was hexagonal.[42] And then the triangular temple of Jupiter, and then the square temple of Mars, and the square temple of the Sun, and then the recta-triangular temple of Venus, and the temple of Mercury, a triangle inside a rectangular square, and the octagonal temple of the Moon." That explains to us the reason why Prophet Muhammad liked Umayya ibn Abu-al-Silt's verse describing God in a grandeur legendary image:

*Saturn and an ox under His right foot*

*An eagle under the other and a watching lion*

That is why when Prophet Muhammad had suddenly risen with his religion, the tribe of Quraysh called him the Sabii, in its popular meaning, because he had performed the prayers rituals exactly like in Mandaeanism: he performed ablution and prostrated himself the way they perform ablution and prostrate themselves. The interpreters, however, confirm that the Jews' *qibla* was to the west, not to the north, while the Christian *qibla* was to the east. According to *Seerat ibn Hisham*, the delegation of Najran's Christians[43] turned their faces to the east when they prayed in the Mosque of al-Qiblatayn. Ibn al-Mustabser[44] confirms that he had seen the place specified for the two *qiblas* together in the mosque, one of which was to the east and the

42 Correctly, it is rather square. I don't know the reason behind al-Muqrizi's mistake.

43 It was called by Ptolemy Nagrametropolis. It was also mentioned in the ancient Yemeni inscriptions. The oldest mention of it in al-Musnad's inscriptions goes back to the time of the Sabai Makareb – the State of Saba. Najran was also mentioned in al-Namara inscription, 328 AD, where it was called Najran the city of Shammar, after the name of one of its kings, Shammar Yahra'esh. It was also mentioned in a text that had referred to a campaign that marched from Najran to Nabator (the city of al-Nabt). Its history goes back hundreds of years before Christ.

44 *Ibn al-Mustabser's History.*

other to the west. As Najran's name was linked to the first Christianity and with the continuation of the purifying ritual in al-Yeridin, I shall stop a little bit at the historicity of the name in order to complete the religious conception of the meaning of the existence of A'aber's name.

The name of Najran appeared in the inscription referred to as "*Jam 579*", in this way (translated):

> *"Accompanied by their commander al-Sharh Yahdhub, king of Saba and Reedan, they returned with the pillage, the captivities, Dhibaa Ba'l tha Sahrat and the land of Himyar and Najran."*

The scholars of ancient history and historiographers of Yemen know that the fighting Yemeni kingdoms had waged fierce wars among themselves. It seems that Najran at the time of al-Sharh Yahdhub had lost its traditional status among the other kingdoms as a rival force and become more acquiescent to the Kingdom of Saba and thu Reedan, the nucleus of the ancient central state. As the Christians of Najran at the appearance of Arab Christianity were not in accord with Judaism on circumcision and had never been circumcised, it was a must for them not to be in accord with the Qibla's direction. Having disagreed with the practice of circumcision, Christianity had agreed, though, on the principle of crossing Jordan. In fact, for deep spiritual reasons, it had endeavored to confirm it as a central conception in religious purity. Therefore, it was familiar to see that the bibles emphasize purification in Jordan, while Islam later satisfied itself with concentrating on the holiness of water in the rituals demanding purifying the body, but created a new equivalent, namely soil (sand) as an alternative to water, urging Muslims to look for pure

soil (sand) when water is not available.[45] This is because soil and water are two correlative elements in the legend of first creation.

Consequent to this presentation, we emphasize the following concepts:

1. The river ha-Yeridin that was mentioned in the Torah refers to an earthly river. It was known with the same name in Yemen, the name of the grand patriarch Yarid ibn Mihlaeel whose name was assumed by a tribe and who was mentioned by al-Hamadani and other Arab and Muslim narrators of *khabar*. It is also the valley known as Wadi Mour, the great water stream of Tihama.

2. The origin of this nomenclature is akin to a very ancient religion that can be considered the founding religion of all the following religions. It is the religion of the water crossing (Ibrani), in the sense of purification, not in the limited sense of earthly crossing. This great religion had been based on sanctifying living (celestial) water that had been formed in its earthly image as ha-Yeridin.

3. This religion had preceded Judaism that would later borrow the same conception of the crossing, albeit through humanizing it by turning A'aber, the hero, into a human-being having an offspring and tribal branches.

4. Finally, the name does not refer to the name of River Jordan, the same way that A'aber does not refer to a historical figure as much as it refers to a remnant of a very ancient religion,

45 " If you are ill and cannot wash yourselves; or, if you have relieved yourselves or had intercourse with women while traveling and can find no water, take some clean sand and rub your faces and your hands with it. Allah is benignant and forgiving." The Holy Quran, Surah: Women, verse: 43.

that of immersion in water, i.e. baptism. All this calls us to notice the following idea: the conception of crossing ha-Yeridin in Judaism is a central religious conception that has nothing to do with the claim of crossing River Jordan.

# Chapter Three

***Joshua Did Not Conquer Palestinian Jericho***

We shall stop here at the legend of the fall of Jericho with the purpose of starting a scientific argument against the invention of history; for no writer of ancient Palestinian history, whether having a religious or a historical view, with the exception of a very small number, did not repeat the false claim of the fall of Jericho in the hands Joshua, the disciple of Moses, who, by the Lord's command, had committed a massacre against the Palestinians. One is amazed that this narrative is not found in the Hebrew version of the Old Testament. Nevertheless, it had easily found its way to the brains of millions of contemporary Arabs and Muslims as an indisputable historical fact, despite the fact that ancient Arabs and early Muslims had known nothing about this event. It is regrettable to accept this story as a factual event without the least verification about its credibility, not only on the part of the historians, but also on the part of the archeologists, which had led to a great chaos in history and the sequence of events and ages. No one has enquired about the source of this narrative: are there any authentic records and inscriptions to confirm it? Is it sufficient to depend on a Biblical text only without archeological proofs to accept it? From where had those historians gotten their conception of this event? I shall give the readers the original Hebrew text that speaks of the so-called conquering of Jericho to show objectively how the

orientalist imagination had invented the fall of Jericho together with a baseless history and how the Arab professors of history and archeology had contributed, perhaps unintentionally, in promoting this lie. Following is the Hebrew text Joshua (7:2-5):

" וישלח יהושע אנשים מ יריחו העי אשר עם בית און מקדם ל בית אל
ויאמר אליהם לאמר עלו ורגלו את הארץ ויעלו האנאשים וירגלו את העי וישבו
אל יהושע ויאמרו אליו אל יעל כל העם כאלפים איש או כשלשת אלפים איש יעלו
ויכו את העי אל תיגע שמה את כל העם כי מעט המה ויעלו מן העם שמה
כשלשת אלפים איש וינסו לפני אנשי העי ויכו מהם אנשי העי כשלשים וששה
איש וירדפום לפני השער עד השברים ויכום במורד וימס לבב-העם, ויהי למים

"Joshua had sent his men from Yerikho and al-U'yy near Bayt Awn, Qudum and Bayt Eel, and he asked them to ascend and examine the land. The men had ascended and examined al-U'yy and they went back to Joshua and said to him: let not all the people ascend. Let us go up with two or three thousand men who will remain at al-U'yy, so we do not exhaust all the people. And about three thousand people had ascended, but they were defeated by al-U'yy's men and thirty six of them were killed, so they carried them behind in front of al-Sha'r and near Shubreem and returned with the wounded."

It is noticed from this text that the battle had taken place at a mountainous place called Yerikho and that Joshua's men had come from numerous places, part of which are Mount al-U'yy, Wadi Awn and al-Qudum. It is also understood that the attack did not occur except after exploring the place, when a small force had sneaked in and returned with the right position and the necessity of being cautious and that the attack should not start except with a limited number – about three thousand men. It is understood from the text that Mount Yerikho is located near

Mount al-Sha’r and Wadi Shubreem (al-Shibr). When the attack started, the attacking force suffered a great loss; therefore, the dead were moved and buried in these two nearby places, while the wounded were evacuated to the place where they had started. It is interesting in this text, which is what the translators did not notice, that it had used a unique Arabic word *ardafa* (וירדפום), meaning ‘carry behind,’ which is a word that the ancient Yemenis had often used and was included in the hierarchy of jobs, like *ardaf al-mulouk*, for those who walk behind the kings and princes in a procession. In our opinion, when the Hebrew text uses an expression taken from the dialects of south Arabia decisively confirms its belonging to the Yemeni society. Now, is there a scientific reason to imagine the event taking place in Palestine? The Palestinian Jericho is not mountainous, nor is it a fortified town over a mountain. It is in fact in the lowest place below sea level. There is no mountain called al-U‘yy in the vicinity, nor Wadi Shubreem, nor Wadi Awn nor Mount Sha’r nor al-Qudum Fortress. We shall, therefore, look for the names of these places in the geography of Sanaa and Thamar, which is the geographic space of a series of rugged mountains, similar to the Torah’s description.

Mount al-U‘yy (or al-A‘wi, as it is pronounced today) is located in the governorate of Sanaa in Manakha Directorate in upper U‘zlat al-Maghareb, where the village bearing its name is also located. Reading Joshua’s text about conquering Jericho will reveal a precise description of a very high and fortified mountain, where the attack had required exploring the area, and the pioneers whom he had dispatched came back with a practical suggestion not to exhaust all the men in climbing a great mountain with strong defenses and it was better to use a small team of two or three thousand men. This is a precise description

strongly indicating that the Torah's Jericho is that great and well-fortified mountain, not a place that lies below sea level. The adjacent Mount al-A'wi is still standing high in Sanaa bearing its Biblical name. Following is a description of the mountain and its location: Mount al-A'wi is located in the Directorate of Manakha (Manakh in the Old Testament). Geographically, it represents the western part of a group of directorates that begin with the Directorate of Bani Matar (Matara in the Old Testament). Generally speaking, all these directorates are well-known since old time with their many mountainous fortresses and heights. In their high mountains and many valleys, they make a unique region of its kind in the world. Mount al-A'wi is a great mountain that is 2,400 meters above sea level. The mountains of Shabam (Shabamah in the Old Testament), Masar and al-A'rr are shorter than Mount al-A'wi. Where, then, is Yerikho of Yemen located, the name of which had been taken by the immigrants to Palestine and Syria? (Syria's Ariha is in Idlib.) Before that, however, what is the real meaning of the name? The word Yerikho means the moon, which is the name given to the god of time for the Yemenis. From this name the Arabic word "*tarikh*" (history) was derived, because they had been following the lunar calendar. Until today, the name of the Palestinian Ariha (Jericho) means the lunar god. Linguists had been elaborate in explaining the meaning of the word Yerikh – Yerikho, but there is unanimity among them that it has an organic relationship with the word "*tarikh*" (history). According to Dr. Jawad Ali, Anstas al-Karmili, unlike the past linguists, had elaborated in this and came out with believing that "*yarah*" is the sun, according to the language of Tadmur, which was very close to Arabic. The same word means moon in the Assyrian language. Finally, its original meaning probably indicates both the sun and the moon, for some people, like the Zoroastrians, used to chronicle events

based on the revolution of the sun, while others, like the Jews, depended on the moon. The analysis of the meaning of Yerikh has attracted quite a number of the Yemeni scholars who were interested in Musnad inscriptions, like Humayd al-A‘wwadhi who had scientifically revised the inscriptions and noticed that the wording "*warakh h w*" in the ancient Yemeni inscriptions had meant "*tarikhuh*" (history) and "*shahruh*" (month). In the Acadian and Amharic languages "*warakh*" means moon and month. In his opinion, the morphological and phonetic resemblance to the language in Yemen is noticed, which is the same in Arabic. This makes the Yemeni language the nearest origin of Arabic, where the word "*warakh*" has gained another indication, namely recording events through succession of time, not only the meaning of month only. According to al-A‘wwadhi, this word means olden times and recording together. The word "*warakh*" in the Musnad inscriptions had given birth to "*arakh*" that means an event or an incidence, which is the definition of history, being a description of events. This wording in the ancient Yemeni inscriptions dates back to the eighth century BC, i.e. before the presumed time of the Old Testament; for the word was found in an inscription taken from Yella region, which dates back to the time of the Makrabis Yada‘ Eel Tharih and Yatha‘ Amribin who had ruled in the vicinity of the eighth century and the beginning of the seventh century BC (Iryani Inscription 48 = Y85y/3). It was also found in the inscription, *G/1000=Res3946*, of the seventh century BC, and the inscription *al-Jawf 04.37A*, from the city of al-Sawdaa in al-Jawf of the fifth century BC. All this confirms the morphological, phonetic and semantic resemblance between the word in classical Arabic and the ancient Yemeni language. In Arabic, one can say, *arrakha* or *warrakha* meaning to record history, and *ta'rikh* or *tawrikh* for historiography, which shows a difference between northern

and southern Arabic. It is certain that this quick résumé of the semantic of the name and its history refers to the fact that the mountainous city called Yerikho in the Old Testament has no relationship whatsoever with the Palestinian Ariha (Jericho). Being mentioned in the Old Testament is not proof of the Old Testament's relationship with Palestine.

Yemeni Ariha is located in the region of Sanban within the administrative borders of the governorate of Thamar near Sanaa, specifically in the narrow strip connecting Sanaa, al-Baydhaa and Thamar, where, until today, a large city with ruins of Himyari buildings and ancient inscriptions exits. In the neighborhood, there is a great mountain bearing its ancient name, Yarakh. In the surroundings of this high Yarakh (Yarikho) Mountain, there are very important archeological sites, like Himmat al-Dhabi' and Himmat al-Za'tar. This name, Himmah, is mentioned in the Torah in the same wording, which the orientalists thought to be Syria's Hamah. The fall of Mount Yerikho, according to the Torah's text, was a great turning point that had paved the way to Joshua's religious and political victory.

This victory, however, was costly from the beginning, as many of the men were killed or wounded. If we scrutinize this part of the scenario in the Old Testament, we shall discover a new dimension in forging history. When the first attack failed and the attackers fell dead or wounded, they were taken to Mount al-Sha'r (לפני השער). The translators of the text, however, had translated the word (השער) as "gate"; i.e. the dead and the wounded were taken to the gate! This is meaningless, of course; for, actually, they had been taken to Moutn Sha'r in the vicinity. Today, we can see Mount Sha'r with the same name in the same place. It is, administratively, within the directorates of Ibb Governorate. At that time there were no administrative borders as the territories

were interconnected. The directorate of al-Sha'r that had taken its name from the Torah's mountain is located to the east of the city of Ibb, the capital of the governorate. It is bordered from the north by the directorate of al-Siddah (Asdud in the Torah), which was claimed by the orientalists to be Palestinian Asdud. It is bordered from the south by Mikhlaf, the kingdom of al-O'ud, as in the Torah. One can also see the great historical fortresses in the green heights, as if narrating history, its forgotten stories and events. Mount al-Sha'r was mentioned by the late Judge Muhammad Ahmad al-Hujri in his book *Majmou' Buldan al-Yaman wa Qabaelih (The Entire Yemeni Cities and Tribes)* as al-Shi'r, which is wrong and does not suit neither Hebrew nor Arabic.[1] It is, in our opinion al-Sha'r, which means the place with dense trees. The directorate of al-Sha'r is about 45 Km away from the city of Ibb, with an area of 145 Km[46]. It is constituted of 8 U'zlas, namely al-Amluk (Imluk in the Torah), Bayt al-Saydi (Bayt Sada in the Torah), al-A'bsi (A'bs in the Torah), al-Qabel al-Asfal, al-Qabel al-A'la (ha-Jabul in the Torah) and al-Miftah (Yeftah in the Torah). In the old days, there were shops in al-Sha'r for knitting Sha'ri garments, a craft that was mostly practiced by Jews. According to the text, the dead were buried in another place called Shubreem (plural of Shubr in Hebrew). Today, it is one of the great mountains. Administratively, it is part of the Governorate of Lahaj in al-Maflahi Directorate bearing its old name Shubreem – al-Shubr. The rest of Joshua's men who had taken part in the attack had come from al-Qudm Fortress. This fortress is still there in the Governorate of Taez in al-Mawaset Directorate that includes the city of al-Sawaa, inhabited by the Sons of Sawaa. Al-Qudm Fortress is located

46 A Study published in the site: http://alarachi.maktoobblog.com. It was mentioned in the Yemeni Encyclopedia that al-Sha'r is named after al-Sha'r ibn U'dayy ibn al-Hareth ibn Sharhabil ibn Mathoub ibn Yarim thi Rai'n. it is connected to Ibb by 3 main roads.

near the borders of al-Shamateen Directorate (Yushmat) and the fortress of Mount Yameen. This integral geographic space, in its description and names, should attract our attention, for it is one that preserves the real history that has been ignored and replaced with an invented one. If we accompany Joshua in his campaign against Yerikho, we will reach with him the place called Juljul. (Remember that Jesus Christ had walked on al-Juljul – al-Juljula Road. Notice also the relationship between the name of Joshua (*Yĕhôshúa* ) and Yasoo‘ (Jesus).) According to the Hebrew text, no sooner the inhabitants in the nearby *makhaleef* (kingdoms) had heard of the fall of Yerikho, than they came to Joshua with tattered clothes declaring their obedience and requesting him to give them a commitment not to attack them. Among these was a group that the Torah called "*ha-Mihnah*." This is the Hebrew text:

" נלבו אל יהושע אל המחנה הגלגל"

> *"And al-Mihnah and al-Jalajel had gone to Joshua."*

Those were among the tribes who were overawed by the successive news of Joshua's victory in Mount Yerikho and found it wise to anticipate the march towards their habitations by negotiating with him directly; hence they formed a delegation to meet with him. We can see today the same mountainous places and tribes exactly in their Torah's wordings. The inhabitants of al-Jalajel (Juljul in the Torah) are the inhabitants of the valley known with the name of al-Jalajel in U‘zlat al-Hawtah in the Governorate of Lahaj, where there is a village that keeps its name, al-Jalajel. It is an ancient settlement that is very well-known to the archeologists within the directorate of Tibn (as in the Torah). In its neighborhood is the tribe of al-Mihla, whose

village is known with the same name, al-Mihnah (with the ltter 'l' turned into 'n', which is quite common.) Directly after that, Joshua went to seize Hasour (Hadhour), because it was one of the oldest kingdoms, according to the text.[47] It seems that the news of his plan had spread among the tribes and when the king of Hadhour heard of it, he asked for the help of his allies, the kings of Mudan, Samron, Aksaf and othors, which the text calls them al-Huwayyeen. Following is the Hebrew text:

" ויהי כשמע יבין מלך חצור וישלח אל יובב מלך מדן ואל מלך שמרון ואל מלך אכשף"

*"It was that Yabeen, king of Hadhour, had learnt; so he wrote to Yuab, king of Mudan, the king of Samron and the king of Aksaf."*

Before analyzing this text, we should give our attention to the name of the king of Hadhour, Yabeen. The 'y' at the beginning of the noun or the verb is a vocal letter; therefore, his name should be read as Been, which is a famous name in the list of the kings of Yemen, like Ya'zel Been. The same wording had appeared in an inscription that had the name of the Yemeni king Yada' Eel Been, whose name was mentioned in the Hadhouri writing known as *SE 43*, being the son of King Sama Yafa'. From this text, it is understood that the kingdom of Mikhlaf Hadhour had requested its near and far allies for help. When we look for Hadhour, we discover that it is in the close neighborhood of Sanaa, while its far away allies are in the surroundings of Shabwa and Ibb. Think of this discovery: the mountain and valley of Hadhour – Hasour are located northwest of Sanaa, within the heights of al-Ahnoum (Hanom in the Torah) near Mount Thalima (Thalam

47 The Hebrew text is "כי חצור לפנים היא ראש כל הממלכות" "because Hadhour to them was the top of the kingdoms."

in the Torah) between horizontal lines1600-1618 degrees north and between longitudinal lines 4336-4743 east. These heights are part of the northwestern heights of Yemen, where the highest peak is 2,620 meters above sea level. Administratively, they are divided over four directorates, one of which is al-Madan Directorate that had borrowed its name from the high mountain Madan (as in the Torah). All of them are called al-Ahnoum Mountains. The kingdom of Mikhlaf Hadhour is one of the oldest Yemeni kingdoms. It is said to be named after Hadhour ibn U‘dayy ibn Malek, one of whose children is prophet Shua‘yb. As for Wadi Hadhour, it runs into the territory of Bani Matar (Matarah in the Torah) Directorate. As the kingdom besieged by Joshua had sought help from its allies, the nearest place where those allies may exist is what is known today as the Governorate of Ibb. Until today, there is a mountain in Ibb with the same name as Mount Samarah (Samron in Hebrew), which is 2,500 meters above sea level, where some Himyari ruins have been recently discovered by the Archeology Department. One of the most famous valleys in Ibb is Wadi A‘nna (as in the Torah), al-A‘deen (as in the Torah) (Directorate of al-A‘deen), Wadi Bina (as in the Torah), al-Saddah (Asdud in the Torah) and Wadi Dumt (as in the Torah). Mount Kassab is located in the neighboring Governorate of Shabwa. Astonishingly is that the inhabitants of this mountain are al-Samarnah Clan. As we know that the Governorate of Shabwa is to the east of Sanaa, 474 Km's away, and it is connected with the Governorate of Maareb from the north. This means that it is within the geographic space described by the Hebrew text. Here are the two mountains of Hadhour and Madan to the north and the west of Sanaa, exactly as in Joshua's text above. Here is also Mount Kassab in the Governorate of Shabwa east of Sanaa, and Mount Samara – Samron in the Governorate of Ibb. As for the Huwayyeens, whose help had

been requested by Hadhour to encounter Joshua, they are until today in their old place in their mountainous U‘zla in Maareb, within what is known as the Directorate of Maareb and U‘zlat Qaza‘a Clan, where there is a village named al-Huwayy, after the old mountain. Maareb is located to the north east of Sanaa, at a distance of about 173 Km’s only.

This means that Joshua’s battle to seize Jericho did not stop at the borders of this place. It continued until he conquered the kingdom of Hadhour and the king of this large kingdom was helped by his allies in the east and west of Sanaa, not in the east and west of Jordan. How should we consider the real goals of these battles? An objective reading of the text will give us a different picture than the forged one promoted by the orientalist imagination. This had prompted some Arab writers to market some nonsense mocking “Joshua, the Godly general,”[48] the essence of which was that the land had been seized for religious reasons. This is a traditional behavior that was resorted to by all the ancient tribes. As Joshua was leading the Sons of Israel as a monotheistic group of people, seizing lands had a complete religious character, especially that the strong Yemeni Makhaleef were atheist tribal kingdoms. This is what explains to us the real reason for his attack that had ended up with subjugating the atheist inhabitants. As we have noticed, the historical stage of these events was not Palestine, but Yemen, where atheist tribal Makhleef (kingdoms) had been there. At the end, however, Joshua was unable to achieve all the goals of his campaigns, for he had grown old, while wide areas of land remained under the hegemony of the atheists. (This reminds us of the Islamic experience, as the great conquests were realized after the death of Prophet Muhammad.)

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48 See, e.g., Firas Sawwah, *ibid*, in his analysis of Joshua’s text.

***Ariha (Jericho) and the Cities of Refuge in Ancient Yemen***

I shall stop here a little at one of the most important sections in the Book of Joshua, pertaining to distribution of territories and sanctifying some of them, considered forbidden for fighting and open to anyone seeking refuge if he unintentionally has killed a soul. It seems to me that the Quranic Surah (chapter) that refers to Moses killing a man who was quarrelling with one of his supporters is closely akin to these traditions, knowing that the history of Greater Syria, particularly that of Palestine, does not know of this tribal tradition. One of these cities is mountainous Jericho.

Following is the Hebrew text (20: 1-9):

" וידבר יהוה אל-יהושע לאמר דבר אל-בני ישראל לאמר תנו לכם את- ערי המקלט אשר-דברתי אליכם ביד-משה לנוס שמה רוצח מכה-נפש בשגגה בבלי-דעת והיו לכם למקלט מגאל חדם ונס אל-אחת מהערים האלאה ועמד פתח שער העיר ודבר באזני זקני העיר ההיא את-דבריו ו ואספו אתו העירה אליהם ונתנו-לו מקום וישב עמם וכי ירדף גאל הדם אחריו ולא- יסגרו את-הרצח בידו כי בבלי- דעת הכה את-רעהו ולא-שנא הוא לו מתמול שלשום וישב בעיר ההיא עד-עמדו לפני העדה למשפט עד-מות הכחן הגדול אשר יהיה בימים ההם אז ישוב הרוצח ובא אל-עירו ואל-ביתו אל-העיר אשר-נס משם"

ויקדשו את-קדש בגליל, בהר נפתלי, ואת-שכם, בהר אפרים; ואת-קרית ארבע היא חברון, בהר יהודה. ומעבר לירדן יריחו, מזרחה, נתנו את-בצר במדבר במישר, ממטה ראובן; ואת-ראמת בגלעד ממטה-גד, ואת-גלון (גולן) בבשן ממטה מנשה. אלה היו ערי המועדה לכל בני ישראל, ולגר הגר בתוכם, לנוס שמה, כל-מכה-נפש בשגגה; ולא ימות, ביד גאל הדם, עד-עמדו, לפני העדה.

*"And the Lord ordered Joshua, saying: talk to the Sons of Israel and tell them I am making for you*

*secure houses, the ones that Moses had told you about, so that every killer of a soul not for a soul or supported by law is to be given assurance and the homeless is given superfluous lineage. It will be for you a shelter against revenge, and there bloodshed shall be forbidden. Everyone in Mount Sha'r and the houses behind can take refuge there. By permission of the elders, they can fearlessly enter the houses. If a fugitive comes, let him enter. It is forbidden to deliver him to his demanders. To be assured, let him stay in the houses until his problem is scrutinized. If the high priest who looks into his problem dies, he will be forgiven and sent back to his house reassured."*

This religious legislation is quite clear. It specifies a series of fortified mountainous places as houses for living, as well as shelters for whoever is demanded by tribal justice, where his blood is protected and delivering him to his demanders is forbidden. Among the most important of these mountainous houses that had been sanctified and turned into a shelter for every killer of a soul not for a soul or unintentionally against the legislation is: Qadas (קדש), Mount Naftali (הר נפתלי), al-Rab' Village (קרית ארבע) (literarily it is Hebron in Mount Judea),[49] Yerikho (יריחו), Bassr (בצר) and Golan (גולן- גלון). It is clear that protecting the killer was an ancient tribal culture with religious bases and was legislated in a comprehensive constitution, that of interdiction, for the tribes do not deliver whoever seeks their protection. When he approaches them requesting protection of his blood against those who demand him, he is protected as per this legislation. The previous text

49 The Hebrew text in Mount Judea (בחר- יהודה) includes an emphasis that Jabal Hud is specifically meant.

undoubtedly refers to a mountainous rugged environment that includes fortified mountainous seclusions that, by force of the religious legislation, had become secure domiciles. This is a pure Yemeni environment unmatched neither in Palestine nor in Arabia. Besides, the domiciles that Joshua had specified do not exist there. We shall, therefore, discuss the text and analyze it from two angles:

**First**: Specifying the mentioned places by name without change.

We shall start with the name of Qadas, the mountain that had been sanctified and had become, by virtue of its holiness, a secure place where bloodshed and delivering fugitives are forbidden. Until today, this great mountain still keeps its name and the way it is pronounced, with the popular refrain, the blessed Mount Qadas. Located to the south of Taez, it is a most beautiful and fertile mountain. One of its most important valleys is known by the name of Wadi Mafalees (al-Fals – al-Falsah). As for Qaryat al-Rab‘, which was wrongly translated into Qiryat Arva‘, it is an old gathering of villages in the governorate of Lahaj. In the new administrative division, it is called al-Miflihi Directorate, or U‘zlat al-Miflihi, where Mount al-Shibr – Shibreem is located, the name of which we had seen in the story of attacking Jericho. Al-Rab‘ includes Jabal al-Shibr city, Bayt Harad (Wadi Harad in the Old Testament), al-Rashaa villages, Hissn La‘nuq Thamda, Dar al-Siqaya and others. As for Jawlan (Golan in Hebrew), it is certainly not the Syrian Jawlan (Golan), and being considered so by the orientalists is nothing by unmatched geographic deception, for al-Quds is very far from al-Jawlan. By this name, Joshua had actually intended Khawlan, which is a series of mountains after which the tribe had been named. It is one of the directorates of the Governorate of Sanaa. The name Khawlan was mentioned

in the ancient Yemeni inscriptions for the first time around the 7th century BC and in the same Hebrew wording. The name of Khawlan is that of three different tribes, namely, Khawlan-Jadd, or what is known as Khawlan al-Ajdud, whose territory was located in the region extending from Umm Layla Mountain in the north to the southwest of the field of Saadah. Today, this tribe is known as Khawlan ibn A'amer and its habitation includes a vast area in the Governorate of Saadah. The same name is also assumed by Southern Khawlan or Khawaln Radman, and also Khawlan (Khadhlam), which is the tribe whose territory is located in the region surrounding Sirwah Khawlan, known as Khawlan al-Tayyal or Khawalan al-A'aliya in the east and northeast of Sanaa.

Here is the Hebrew text:

" נתנו את-בצר במדבר במישר ממטה ראובן ואת-ראמת בגלעד ממטה גד"

*"And he granted them Basar in the field of Wadi Misur and the tribe of Reuben, as well as Rimah with its rocks of the tribe of Jadd."*

Wadi Misur is located northwest of the Governorate of I'mran, which is part of Sanaa, but had been separated in the new administrative division. There are famous valleys one of which is Wadi al-A'mshiyyah, Harf Sufian (like in the Torah), Wadi Muthab (Maydaba - מידבא in the Torah), Wadi al-Qaflah (Maqfelah "המכפלה" in Abraham's story - Book of Genesis) and al-A'sha (like in the Torah). As for Rima, with its great rocks and enchantingly gorgeous mountains, it is located in the middle of the series of western Yemeni mountains, between 14.36 and 14.88 degrees north and 43.50 and 44 east. By virtue of its

spellbinding geographic nature of fertile valleys, plateaus and mountainous heights, it has become a tourist attraction in the recent years. From the peak of Rima's fascinating mountains, one can see Mount Bard (Bardan in the Torah) in the Directorate of Kasmah, which is approximately 2,850 meters above sea level. From there, one can also see how those beautiful mountains are green all the year round. Looking westward, one can also see from the peak of any mountain in Rima the city of al-Hudayda, the red Sea and the rest of the cities and regions of Tihama. One can also enjoy the scene of Hunaysh Archipelago, the small islands and the ships plowing the waves of the Red Sea and al-Makha Coast (Makha in the Torah) and Mount Sabr in the Governorate of Taez. Moreover, one can see from far away the lights of Sanaa scattered in the darkness of night. Expanded appropriation of land had led to an automatic publishing of the interdiction constitution that had included many regions in Yemen, where certain places had been forbidden and sanctified with the purpose of keeping them away from the religious and tribal struggles, a practice that reminds us of the Islamic interdiction regarding some months and places.

**Secondly**: Regarding the second angle, we shall dedicate it to prove that these traditions are in the core of the Yemeni culture that is supported in the ancient modern history. In actual fact, specialists in the ancient Yemeni history, as well as archeologists, know that the traditions of granting protection to the tribal fugitives was and is still followed in the Yemeni regions. These traditions appeared together with the appearance of the cities of refuge all over Yemen. In Yafi‘, for example, there are until today many cities of this category, like the city of Kheela at al-Hadd center, which is a sanctified city where fighting is prohibited. It is said that the people of Yafi‘ refrain

from pointing their guns or showing their arms against anybody. Whoever seeks refuge at their city becomes secure and no one may assault him as long as he is there at any cost.

In the old days, the poet Umru-l-Qays, a Yemeni poet who belonged to Kinda Tribe, had a poem that described these traditions:

*Aja had refused to give away her neighbor*

*Let any wishing fighter rise for her*

*The sons of Thua'l are her neighbors and protectors*

*Protecting against the snipers of Saad and Nael*

There is also another sanctified city in Yafi' called Khalaaqah located in the territory of al-Khalaaqi Tribe, one of the tribes of al-Mawsata and is considered its second largest city. In addition, there are the cities of Bani Bakr and al-Hajr, called Hajr al-Ab-o'us, in relation to al-Ab-o'us tribes in Yafi'. All this may refer us back to the Quranic verses about the traditions of protecting fugitives in al-Qassas Surah (chapter)[50]when Prophet Moses had unintentionally killed a man whom he saw quarrelling with one of his supporters: "One day he entered the town unnoticed by the people and found two men fighting, the one of his own race, the other an enemy. The man of his race appealed for his help against his enemy, so that Moses struck him with his fist and killed him. 'This is the work of Satan,' said Moses. 'He is the sworn enemy of man and seeks to lead him astray. Forgive me, Lord, for I have sinned against my soul.' And Allah forgave him for he is the Forgiving One, the Merciful." In another verse of the same chapter, there is a specific reference: "He said: 'By the favor You have shown me, Lord, I vow I will never lend a

50 Al-Qassas Sioura, verses 15-20.

helping hand to a wrong-doer.' Next morning as he was walking in the town in fear and caution, the man he had helped the day before cried out to him again for help. 'Clearly,' said Moses, 'you are a quarrelsome man.' And when Moses was about to lay his hands on their enemy, he said, 'Moses, would you kill me as you killed that wretched yesterday? You are surely seeking to be a tyrant in this land, not an upright man.'" At last, this religious tradition becomes manifest in this verse, "But someone came running from the other end of the city. 'Moses,' he cried, 'the elders are plotting to kill you. Fly for your life, if you will heed my council!'"

The essence of these verses and the pre-Islamic poetry and the presence of refuge cities in contemporary Yemen all refer to a deep-rooted and continuous religious and social culture based on sheltering and protecting the fugitive. These traditions are linked to the existence of special sanctified cities where fighting is prohibited and tribesmen respect their holiness, therefore, refrain from attacking them. It is certain that such cities are none-existent in Palestine or in Jordan. It is also certain that Palestinian Ariha (Jericho) is a not a mountainous, sanctified city where fighting is prohibited or where the fugitive seek protection.

# Chapter Four

***Fall of Ariha (Jericho) and the Invention of History***

This vital part of my new contribution in correcting the history of Palestine is based on the need for putting up a theory that comprehensively and objectively revises two fake stories that seem well-connected and have been consecrated in the religious and historical culture in our region and the rest of the world. The first story is that of the fall of Palestinian Ariha (Jericho) in the hands of the Israelis under the leadership of Joshua. This event had never taken place and, as we had already shown, its natural stage does not identify at all with the geography of Palestine. The other story is that of the existence of the large Israelite tribes to the west and the east of the river. This is a baseless story. The importance of all this lies in the following conception: distribution of land west of ha-Yeriden, i.e. west of Wadi Mour, strictly confirms that the fortified, mountainous Ariha (Yerikho) that had been sanctified (i.e. fighting had been prohibited there) has nothing to do with Palestine. Hence our repositioning of the two events in their right geographic frame and completely getting rid of this abominable counterfeiting, which will lead to disruption of any basis on which playing with history stands. This intention of the Torah's text in that the Israelite tribes had inhabited the west of ha-Yeriden should be understood as the west of the Yemeni Wadi Mour in the plain of the governorate of al-Hudayda, for this is the geographic space where the stories

of the Old Testament about Ariha had occurred. (Remember: Yerikho is the moon's god for the Yemenis.) The name of Wadi Mour was mentioned in the Book of Genesis in the same wording, Mour. Its water springs out of the west of Hashed city and Mount Yazeed, as well as from the west of Mount Dhila'a, al-Taweela, north of al-Mahweet, al-Khabt, Mount Misour, Hajja, Kahlan, Saqayn and Kashar. It gathers together at al-Wai'that to water al-Zahra region before running into the Red Sea south of al-Lahya. It is the largest valley in Tihama. In this governorate, we shall see Wadi al-Lawiyah – notice the relationship with the Israelite tribe Lawi – that streams from the mountains of Rima. This is the valley that cleaves the territories east and west and separates them.

In this chapter, we shall present a description based on archeological, geographic and field evidences for Yemeni Ariha and the rest of the places that had witnessed the event. The description left by Joshua (Hebrew text: 13:15-23-) strongly supports the theory of this book. It tells us about ha-Yeriden in the following words:

ויתן משה למטה בני ראובן למשפחתם ויהי להם הגבול מערועער אשר על שפת נחל ארנון והעיר אשר בתוך הנחל וכל המישר על מידבא.

*"And Moses had granted land to the sons of Reuben and their clans and so it became theirs when you are coming from A'ru'r that is at the edge of Wadi Arnon the houses in the middle of the valley to all of Wadi Mayser thence to the top of Wadi Mithab."*

This brief section of the text clearly tells about the houses of Reuben Tribe, one of the largest tribes of the Sons of Israel,

inside a geographic space that has absolutely nothing to do with the east and the west of Jordan. As it is clear from the gist of the description, this tribe had inhabited fertile lands lying to the west of Mour (ha-Yeriden) granted to them by Moses himself, for we notice that it refers to a series of valleys (ha-Nahleem) and a series of depressions that, in total, forms a very special geographic space. When we look into this description and accept it as it is, we shall think of the core of the mistake in identifying the Arab state of Jordan with this valley. Is it really possible, for instance, to imagine the presence of such geography, in merely imagining that this river that separates valleys and mountains is River Jordan? In this case, we should be able today to see a series of mountains that are interlocked with a series of valleys and depressions. Where have they disappeared and why? River Jordan, in deed, does not separate valleys and mountains. It does not know, either, the names mentioned in the above text. We do not think that any ancient Greek geographers had seen, heard of or read about anything related to such a series so that they were sure that these mountains had in fact been separated by River Jordan. Naturally, East Jordan does not have such a great river that cleaves it way longitudinally and horizontally in the middle of mountains and valleys.

Due of the long digressions in the text, we shall suffice ourselves with the sections where names of places are mentioned.

Joshua's list of the tribes' habitations to the west of al-Yeriden

| Arabic | Hebrew |
| --- | --- |
| الحُشب | חשבון |
| (Al-Hushb) | (Hashbon) |
| ديبن | דיבן |
| (Diben) | (Dibon) |
| قُدم | קדמת |
| (Qudum) | (Qadimot) |
| ميفعة | מיפעת |
| (Mayfa'a) | (Mayfa'a) |
| القري | קריתים |
| (Al-Qiri) | (Qartaeem) |
| شبم | שבמה |
| (Shabam) | (Shabamah) |
| صيرة وسحر | צרת שחר |
| (Sayra wa Sahar) | (Sarrah Sahar) |
| أوي | אוי |
| (Awi) | (Awi) |
| يشمات (الشماتين) | בית ישמת |
| (Yashmat al-Shamteen) | (Bayt Yashmot) |
| حور | חור |
| (Hour) | (Hour) |
| ربع | רבע |
| (Rab'a) | (Rab'a) |
| ميسر | מישר |
| (Mayser) | (Mayser( |
| مذاب | מידבא |
| (Mithab) | (Maydba) |
| عُرعر | ערוער |
| (U'r'ur) | (A'ru'r) |
| موث وبعل | במות-בעל |
| (Mawth wa Ba'l) | (Bimawt-Ba'l) |
| ضور | דור |
| (Dhawr) | Dor |

These are names of most places mentioned by Joshua (Yehusha‘) west of al-Yeriden, i.e. west of Wadi Mour or what had been once called ha-Yeriden (הירדן). Following is the first notice that occurs to one’s mind in the context of this description: had Joshua been mistaken in his description, or had his text been played with or distorted, or had all these mountains and valleys suddenly disappeared from the geography of the west bank? In case it is accepted as a real possibility, does not this abnormal status mean that Joshua was actually describing a different geography? But where can we find it? This is the essence of my discovery.

In the context of understanding Joshua’s texts, it is important to understand the name of Wadi ha-Yeriden in its religious image that we had explained. It is the holy streaming water that cleaves the lands it passes through into west and east. It seems that the Yemenis had called it Mour, which includes all the phonetic elements for water flowing. (The word “*mour*” in Arabic means speed and the verb “*yamour*” means to be agitated.)

We shall start first with the name “Irin” (Arnon (ארנון) in Hebrew. We notice that the text clearly states the following: “when you are coming from A‘ru‘r that is at the edge of Wadi Arnon…” This means that the narrator of the text had used the place as a guiding point for reaching our destination. He did not say that it was part of the tribe’s habitation.[51] This also applies to the name of the other place U‘re‘er on the road from Najran towards Khawlan about 150 Km. It was mentioned by Musnad inscriptions as a name for an ancient Yemeni god whose

51 Al-Hamadani had given a short description for a valley in Tihama having the same name, Irin, near the habitation of Bani Saleem Tribe, which means that worshipping this god had reached the heart of Arabia.

worshipper used to offer him sacrifices. In the inscription *RES 3945*, we read that the victorious king had made[52] "A special religious banquet for al-Maqa and Saba and he revenged himself on Awsan and Malkho Wilda'm and he destroyed the land of Bilo and Awsan Thanam and Wala (Thu Shamar…. And he attacked, destroyed and granted all Wilda'm's land to his slaves."

> *"And he destroyed Kimnah and besieged and revenged on Nashan and destroyed the areas of Irin Yada' and Nishan from Kimnah and he gave away irrigated agricultural lands."*
>
> *We also find the name in the Nishan inscription"*
>
> *"A'mi Sama' ibn Sha'tho from Thu Wafer had presented this monument to the the god Irin Yada' when he presented a sacrifice to Thu Na'dh for the second time and waged war at Awsan with (Samho) Yafa' king of Nishan when he waged war in Najran with Thu Doran as per the command from Irin Yada' …"*

At the end of the inscription, the following phrase was mentioned: "In the days of Yada' Ab and the clan of Manbet and Maghfirah the lady of the temple."

Analysis of the inscription:

I wish to stop here for a little while to analyze the actual content of the inscription, as it includes indications that, unfortunately, those who had analyzed it could not grasp them deeply enough. The first indication is the presence of the god

52 A.A. al-Ghish Atbashush, *al-Sira'a bayn al-Mamalek al-Yemeniyya al-Qadiman (Struggle between Ancient Yemeni Kingdoms)*, Damascus: Unuversity of Damascus, 2008 (a Ph.D. thesis).

Irin-Yada‘, whose temples had been destroyed in the two battles, together with the name Yada‘-Ab. Here I wish to point out that Yada‘ of Himyar is the same Hebrew Yada‘, which means knowledge or the knowledgeable. It seems that this Yemeni king had been given the title of his knowledgeable god. Who, then, is Yada‘-Ab? From quite a few inscriptions, it becomes evident that he was king of the Kingdom of Nashan, that had been known with having temples for the god Irin (Arnon). There is an inscription that the archeologists know by the name of *Karbus 37* that is kept at the museum of Berlin, Germany, and dates back to the fifth century BC, which is the presumed time of writing the Torah. In this inscription, the name of Nashan is mentioned together with its king Yada‘-Ab. The inscription literally says "Yada‘-Ab king of Nashan." This kingdom of Nashan (Lasan) was mentioned in the Torah as Lasan, with the usual turning the letter "N" to "L" or vice versa. It is known by the Arab archeologists and historians that, in his numerous inscriptions, the king of Saba, Karb Eel, mentioned Nashan (Lasan) that had rebelled against his authority and antagonized him. In his texts, the king of Saba mentioned how he had dealt it a crushing defeat, where his armies had occupied it, burnt all its cities and regions and appropriated its gods A‘shr and Bayhan, as well as whatever property and land that belonged to it.[53] In other texts he mentions that Nashan once again rebelled against him and the Sabaites, therefore, attacked it, and besieged the city of Nashaq (as in the Torah) for three years, consequently Nashaq and its surroundings were annexed to the state of Saba. Thus, this rebellious kingdom had been annexed to the properties of Saba at this time of the history of Yemen. Wadi Mithab (Madba) and Haram (Harmat) are two of its most important possessions. The inhabitants of Nashan (Lasan) were forced to worship the god

53 Jawad Ali, *ibid*.

of Saba al-Maqah, for whom a temple was built in the middle of the city. As we have noticed, the aforementioned text of Joshua literarily says that Irin is in the geographic space of Mithab, not Madaba: “And Moses had granted land to the sons of Reuben and their clans and so it became theirs when you are coming from A‘ru‘r that is at the edge of Wadi Arnon the houses in the middle of the valley to all of Wadi Mayser thence to the top of Wadi Mithab.” Here are the valleys of Irin (Arnon) and the god of the kingdom of Nashan (Lasan), and here is Wadi Mithab, which is an astonishing conformity between the texts of Musnad and those of the Torah.

The first section of the name Irin in the inscriptions should refer to the name of the valley Arnon in Hebrew, which is the Hebrew structcure of the name: Irin becomes Arnon, like Hassr and Hassron. Its name is mentioned in many places in the Torah, which we shall come accross later. As for the second section of the inscription, it should refer to the Hebrew word Yada‘, meaning knowledge. In Arabic, a person who sees one’s fortune is called “*Dhareb Wada*‘” because he/she claims knowledge of the future. In this meaning, Irin-Yada‘ is the ancient Yemeni god of good fortune in the kingdom of Nashan (Lasan). The second of these important indications that had been neglected by the analyzers of the inscription is that the name Irin has all the phonetic elements of the Ark of the Covenant in Hebrew named Aron ( אָרוֹן הַבְּרִית ). What does this mean? It simply and undoubtedly means that the traditions of carrying the Ark of the Covenant in the battles, being linked to some deep spiritual beliefs, is related to an ancient belief that it will bring victory and good luck and it has an origin that precedes the legislations of Moses. This means that Moses had granted territories to some of the tribes extending from Wadi Arnon, where the kingdom of

Nashan would be established, to the west of ha-Yeriden, but not Jordan, the Arab state.

Analyzing the two inscriptions will give the following results:

1. The Sabaite (Sananite) language is the original ancient Hebrew. It is not without a meaning that today's Hebrew in Israel is called the Sananite Hebrew.

2. Many names of places in these two inscriptions are mentioned in the same versions in the Torah, like Bilo, Kamnah, Nashaq, etc., which is something the scientific importance of which cannot be ignored, for it refutes the basis over which the legend of Jordan crossing and conquering of Jericho stands. Besides, the ancient Yemeni dialects have the same ancient forms of names, like Hor – Horon. Such forms have been seen in the Musnad inscriptions and it still exists in the names of many places in Hadhramwt and the Governorate of al-Maharah, like the village of Dhabout, Herot, Khalfoot Port, Nashton Port, the archeological Habrot settlement and Damqot Settlement. The list of the cities and villages of Hadhramwt includes names that cannot be found except in the Hebrew text. To site an example, here is part of a very long list of the names of cities and villages: Nashtot, Dhabot, Hirot, Rawadat Bani Israel, Mayfa'a and Hujr. It is noticed that some of them have the ancient Arabic form, *o* and *t*.

3. Finally, in this light, we must re-read the Torah's text in its capacity as a religious and news-telling text whose origin belongs to an ancient, Yemeni, religious culture. When we analyze the so-called Maysha' (Yesha') Inscription (Mesha Stele), the name goes to a Yemeni god called al-Yesha'

(Yeshu‘, and the Yemeni y in the name is another extinct definite article. the proof of this is the sameness with the names of Wadi Maydab – Mithab and others. This is likely to dismantle the basis over which analyzing the wrongly called Maysha‘ Inscription as a Palestinian or Israeli inscription that has to do with Palestine. This is what we shall do in another book that argues against the interpretation of Maysha‘ Inscription/ Mesha Stele.

Thus, the above facts and conclusions confirm that Wadi Arnon did not exist to the west of Jordan and it had been named after the ancient Yemeni god Irin. It seems, however, according to the description in the text, that it was one day the name of a certain valley near Hajja where Mount Haram is located. (In the text Irin is near "*Harmon*", which is the Hebrew form of "*Haram*".) This may mean that the land was distributed among the tribes from Sanaa to Hajja at the time of Moses. In this geographic space, we can see all the habitations recorded in the Torah. Following is our proof:

Mount Haram is located within a series of mountains in Saada, directorate of Zarah (Zareh in the Torah), and is considered the highest peak. Hajja and Saada are geographically linked with this great series of mountains. On the versant of Haram, the ancient Yemenis had built what is called al-Zariba Dam, which is an archeological landmark that dates back to the 5th century AD, according to a Musnad inscription that had been found on top of the dam. The historical city of Saada had been mentioned in the ancient Yemeni inscriptions with this name, as in the inscription *CH 31*, (Saa‘datm), and was mentioned in the Torah in the same wording, Saa‘dat. The name Zarih was in the form of Zirah (which is an old custom in Arabic that is still followed today). This is quite astonishing and is difficult

to imagine its occurrence by chance. Thus, according to some texts, it is clear that its name is linked to historical events that are related to the time of King Shammar Yahra'sh, one of Tababi'a kings, two of which are the inscriptions *Jam 2109* and *Jam 258*. Saada is a city located at about 242 Km's north of Sanaa, the capital city. As the most important places mentioned in the text of the inscription and that of Joshua are located in Hajja on the way to Sanaa coming from Saada, we shall follow the described geography extending from the north to the south of Sanaa, which is the meaning of east and west of ha-Yeriden, for it is indeed east and west of Wadi Mour and at the same time north and south of Sanaa. Hajja is about 123 Km's away from Sanaa and includes a series of mountainous heights like the mountains of Hajour and the series of Kahlan, Washha and Kashar mountains, together with a series of wide coastal plains that overlook the habitations of Bani Qays where Mount al-Tour is located. (Remember the name of Saul ibn Qays, founder of the royal regime in Israel.) Mount al-Tour is the mountain that was mentioned in the Quran and was wrongly understood to be in Sinai Peninsula. This must be linked to the Tour stories in the Torah. There is also a series of plateaus that are connected with those of Hajour and the plain regions in Midi, which has been understood in a twisted way to mean Midia of Persia. They are also connected with A'bs and other series of mountains, like Qarah, and finally with Mount Haram. Astonishingly, all these names are mentioned in the Torah. It seems that the name of Wadi Irin had moved from worshipping the Yemeni god of good luck into what is now within Saudi Arabia, where there is a water stream that flows until Saadah. Irin flows into one of the most famous moors in Arabia that had been called Sabkhat Irin, after its name. It is about 20 Km's long from north to south. Wadi Irin, which is part the habitations of Bani Saleem, south of the

governorate of Mahd al-Thahab (Ma‘den Bani Saleem) is full of palm trees.

For the sake of drawing a precise geography through which one can follow the places that we have discovered, the none-specialized reader has to have a bit of patience to be able to follow the path in order to be acquainted with the fact. We shall, therefore, present a general description of another place out of the places mentioned in the text, called Hashbon, from where we go on until we find all the mentioned places. The importance of this place arises from the fact that it appears in different places in the Torah's texts in that it is the homeland of some fighting tribes. Depending on ancient Arabic poetry, al-Hamadani and the inscriptions discovered in the Yemeni temples and many mountains and valleys, we shall look for it in the geography of this country that is known very well as the homeland of actual fighting tribes. This is astonishing indeed and its scientific value cannot be ignored. Depending on a linguist and a geographic analysis based on the inscriptions, the root of the name is Hashab. (The ancient Hebrew structure of names has the suffix 'on', like in 'Sayd' and 'Saydon', while the Arabic structure has 'an', like 'A‘den' and 'A‘dnan'.)[54]It is meant to be the habitation of a particular group of people. According to al-Hamadani, those are the inhabitants of al-Hawasheb land, which is wide and fertile and is located in the region of Yafi‘ in the *saru* known by the name of Saru Himyar. This means that the Hashbonites in the Torah were meant to be the inhabitants of al-Hawasheb land in Yafi‘.

Yafi‘ is located northeast of the governorate of Aden between longitudinal lines 45-46 degrees and horizontal lines

54 This structure of names is still in vogue in Hadramawt and al-Mahrah.

13-14 degrees. It is bordered from the south by the sea coast and from the north by the governorate of al-Baydaa. From the east it is bordered by the town of Lawdar (known as Mukayras). From the west it is bordered by al-Dhali‘, whose name is recorded by the Torah as Sali‘ (צלע) because Hebrew lacks the Arabic letter ‘dh’. Early in the 1980s, I had the chance of roaming in this region and seeing its landmarks by myself. I was led by this tour of mine to the governorates of Lahaj and Abyan that form, from a geographical perspective, a gorgeous natural space that is integrated with the geography of Yafi‘, where the western side of the governorate of Abyan and the northeastern side of the governorate of Lahaj become part of a rugged and rocky geography where Mount al-I‘rr (Mount Aden) stands high. This mountain is mentioned in both the Torah and the Musnad inscriptions in the same wording (ער). According to the inscription found in the region of Yafi‘, known as al-Nassr Inscription (*Res. 3945*), which dates back to the 7th century BC, i.e. two centuries before the presumptuous time of writing the Torah, al-Mukreb al-Sabai Karb Aal Watar of Thimar had led a military campaign for the unification of Yemen against a place that is mentioned in the Torah by the name of Tibn. Tibn and Dahas today are administratively within the region of Upper Yafi‘. This king’s campaign ended up with seizing Mount al-I‘rr. The name of this mountain was mentioned in the campaign news as I‘rr, exactly as in both Arabic and Hebrew. One day, within the geography of Yafi‘, al-A‘qareb Sultanate (A‘qrabeem in the Torah), whose territories are located to the west of Aden, was established. The historical capital of the Sultanate of al-Hawasheb was the region al-Musaymeer and it still carries its Torah’s name Hashbon. It forms the most strategic depth in this part of Yemen. By virtue of its distinguished location that overlooks some regions in Taez and al-Dhali‘, this great capital has enjoyed a prominent status

throughout history, as it is on the crossroads of the commercial caravans between the south and the north. Perhaps the visit of the well-known Jewish archeologist Joseph Halevy to Yemen in 1870, on whose inscriptions, collected from al-Hawasheb lands, Jawad Ali had depended, is one of the strongest evidences that confirm this real geographic identity between Yemen and the Torah's territory. Halevy had arrived in Aden after being able to get necessary recommendations for guaranteeing his security in this dangerous trip, thanks to his political, personal and even religious contacts. Even though, he had to put on the traditional Jewish clothes and to let his hair grow until he had two braids similar to those of the religious Jews. He entered Aden and, accompanied by a Jew from Sanaa called Haim Habshosh, he traveled towards Lahaj. Al-Hawasheb tribe, however, hastened to hinder his trip trying all means to thwart it. He, therefore, was forced again to take the land road and then to hire a boat towards Hudayda and thence to Sanaa. There, in Sanaa, Halevy saw the ruins of al-Qalis Church and then he climbed Mount Naqam that overlooks today's al-Sab'een Square in the heart of Sanaa. (Naqam is Laqam in the Torah.) The value of the many inscriptions that he had collected (stolen, in fact), from a procedural point, had exceeded this limited geographic zone; for he was able to visit Mount Yam (as in the Torah) before going towards al-Jawf, helped by some Jewish guides from Saada, to be able to collect the largest number of very important inscriptions where the Jewish history is narrated as a Yemeni history, particularly the history of al-Hawasheb. However, the most important inscriptions having the names of places had disappeared for ever. This is well understood, because the orientalist Torah scholars had exerted their efforts to fabricate the region's history through playing with its facts and hiding the original inscriptions.

This precise demarcation of the geography of Hashbon (al-Hawasheb territories) identifies well with what had been recorded by al-Hamadani, the Torah and the ancient Arabic poetry, as well as what the ancient Yemenis had left of their Musnad inscriptions.

The other place is Dibon (Mount Thayban) that is located in the city of Hamadan to the north of Sanaa, while to the west of Hamadan the city of Qudum (Qadmout) is located. Dibon is a great mountain forming part of the landmarks of the holy city of Kant, in the governorate of Taez. In the Torah it is called Akant, where many temples had been built, which is the reason behind the existence of the inscriptions about the gods, in the frame of worshipping the holy astral trinity of the Moon, the Sun and Venus. One of the most important temples in the city is Hadthum, which is consecrated for the god Taleb Riyam. Considered the major temple, it is located on the peak of Mount Thayban of the land of Arhab, where other temples for this god of the moon are found within a Sumi‘ tribal union. From the inscription it is concluded that it had been built in the 5$^{th}$ century BC and continued until the 3$^{rd}$ century BC. Let us start now from Wadi Mayfa‘a. (See the above list to follow the geographic path.)

The Torah’s text does not give any description of this place, nor does it refer to it as a mountain, a valley or a water spring. It is only mentioned there. According to the given sequence, however, it is located near Shabma, which is near Mount Debon, not far from Maydaba. Naturally, there is no Palestinian Mayfa‘a near these places to the west of River Jordan. Besides, the archeological search and the feverish explorations in the whole of Palestine had not resulted in any proof for the existence of a place with this name. However, as Mayfa‘a of the Torah is located to the west of Wadi ha-Yeriden,

we can easily reach it and find that it still has its ancient name. Here is al-Hamadani's witness (*al-Ikleel* 1:414) literarily confirming Mayfa'a being located in the field of Sanaa. Today it is unknown, as it had been obliterated safe for its ruins. After its obliteration, about four places appeared near each other bearing the same name: Mayfa'a of Mikhlaf Hadhour to the west of Sanaa, Mayfa'a of Miklaf Muqri to northwest of Thimar, a third Mayfa'a in Hadhramawt and finally Mayfa'a to the east of Thimar. Al-Bakri (dictionary 1285) supports the location of Mayfa'a in Hamadan and that it had been homeland of a Yemeni tribe to which belonged the author of *Sifat Jazeerat al-A'rab (Description of Arabia)*, between Najd and al-Sarah north of Tihamah and between Saadah and Khawlan. This means that we are talking about a well-known place, not an imagined one. If we carefully read Joshua's text and understand that it means Mayfa'a of Thimar, then Mayfa'a in the inscriptions is the one in the Torah (מיפעת), the name given lately to the whole valley. In the context of the discussion about this subject, J.F. Breton presumed that this Mayfa'a was not at the time indicated by the inscriptions, but probably another place. Indeed, detailed discussion between the archeologists had taken place about another Mayfa'a that had appeared in Hadhramawt the name of which had been mentioned in a Himyari inscription. Some of them thought that it might not be known in the 7th century BC, basing their hypothesis on that the king of Saba Karb Aal Watar ibn Thimar A'li did not mention it in his inscription, known by the name of *Nassr RES 3945*. This hypothesis is not scientifically supported, because its existence in Joshua's text and in the same description of the surrounding valleys and mountains makes its presence on the ancient historical stage more preponderant. The problem of Mayfa'a had confused me in my work Filisteen al-Mutakhayyala (Imagined Palestine), where I had wrongly

presumed that Mayfa‘a of Hadhramawt was the one intended. Here, I wish to correct my mistake, for it is in fact Mayfa‘a of Thimar, to the west of ha-Yeriden. Wadi Mayfa’a was one of the valleys that belonged to the kingdom of Osan whose authority had included the territory from al-Ma‘afer (governorate of Taez today), where Mount Qadas (קדש) is located to the south until Wadi Jardan, passing through the territories of Lahaj and Abyan. From the Sabai(Sabaean) king’s inscription where names of some places had been recorded, it seems that sever battles had broken out in this place so that its architectural shape had been effaced. Wadi Mayfa‘a flourished once again around the 3rd Hijri century as one of the valleys that belonged to al-Yazani family that had made the city of A‘badan (as in the Torah) its new capital. It is noticed from the descriptions and names mentioned in the inscriptions that Mayfa’a had known names of valleys, like A‘maqeen (A‘maq in the Torah), whose water streams down to the south of A‘taq before flowing down northward to Ramlat al-Saba‘tayn through Wadi Jardan.[55] In Musnad inscriptions, these lands are described as being to the east of the valley (the land of Dhayfaten and Mashriqen), meaning the land of the east. It is referred to in some of the inscriptions as the place where the palace of the Jewish king Thu Yazan al-Himyari had been built.

What is interesting is that the expression ‘*mashreqn*” (land of the east) is mentioned in the Torah in the same wording. As for the new Mayfa‘a, the capital of the kingdom of Hadhramawt

55 In Musnad inscriptions, it was mentioned that the king of Saba had attacked Jardan (and destroyed its valley and destroyed Nasam – Nasham in the Torah – and Wadi Rashay and Jardan and he defeated their king burning all his cities. He also defeated Tafeedh, destroyed it and burned it. He also destroyed his valleys and defeated him until he reached the sea. He burned all his cities on the sea and he subjugated Osan and Hakam), i.e the land of Hakam at Kinanah coast on the Red Sea. The names in this text are names of mountains, valleys and villages.

– before being moved to the city of Shabwa in south Arabia, and whose name had been linked in the Arab memory of history with the name of Sayf ibn Thi Yazan,[56] its son and legendary hero – it is a relatively new name, which is what had caused the scientists' argument about its name. As we know, great misunderstandings had occurred regarding the personality of Sayf ibn Thi Yazan, his historical status and actual name. Many historians – mostly misinformed – had tried to give wrong information about him, making a lot of allegations. It is certain that the real name of King Sayf ibn Thi Yazan is al-Sumayfi' ibn Ma'ad ibn Ya'fur son of the King al-Sumayfi' Ashwa' II. Let is notice here how the name Yeshua' is repeated as the name of a god. This is what should motivate us to ask about the link with the personality of the coming Messiah in the Torah. Yeshua', in our opinion, is the first Messiah who had personified the idea of salvation and the sons of Israel had waited for his appearance after the fall and disappearance of the kingdom of Israel and that of Judea. These events clearly reveal to us the role played by Mayfa'a as a real place that remained, throughout history, homeland for fighting Yemeni tribes and kingdoms. If we identify the description of al-Hamadani and al-Bakri with that of Yeshua' and the Musnad inscriptions, we shall get acquainted with Mayfa'a of the Torah.

In this context, I shall show a text that reveals the size of counterfeiting in the Arabic translation of the Torah into:

56 Saif ibn Yazan was the son-in-law of the Jewish king Thu Nuwas al-Himyari (Yusuf Asar Yithar, whose name was linked with the war against Christian Najran and the event of the Ditch – al-Ukhdood) With a direct help from the Persians, Sayf was able to defeat his ....صهره... the Jewish king Thu Nuwas al-Himyari who had appropriated his throne. After that he went from his homeland Wadi Mayfa'a to check the aspirations of his foe Thu al-Shanater who had separated North Yemen from the South (Aden and Hadhramawt). Thus he was able to liberate Sanaa from the Ethiopian occupation. He had also liberated Tihama and Dhafar, the two Yemeni gates.

וה עיר אשר בתוך הנחל וכל ה מישר על מידבא

*"And the houses in the middle of the valley and all the highland and upper maydab-a"*

The essential mistake in understanding and correctly translating the above text is that the translators thought that the noun "*miser*" (מישר) can mean the high place, thus translating it wrongly into '*najd*' (height), which can be acceptable on the principle, but it contradicts the actual meaning. They had also presumed that "maydaba" (מידבא) is the [Jordanian] city of Madaba. In fact, misunderstanding the expression "all the highland" (וכל ה מישר) resulted in two problems: first, the word that gives the meaning of highland in Hebrew is "*siddah*" (שדה) (this word in Iraqi common dialect also means the high place), i.e. it is not the feminine of "*sid*", it is rather the old word in both Hebrew and Arabic for the high place. The name "*miser*" is unknown in Hebrew. It seems that the translators mixed between this name and "*mishur*" (מישור)., for "easy". They therefore had translated the word into "height". Thus we have two words having different meanings, but became the same without having a right linguist foundation in the Hebrew dictionary. The second problem is that "*najd*" in Arabic does not mean highland only, but it is also the name of a particular place. "*Najd*" in Arabic is generally given to the high land. In Saudi Arabia, the region called *Najd*, for example, is a sizeable area to the south of Iraq having Wadi al-Rimmah. If we accept translation of "*miser*" into "*najd*", we must think carefully of the logic of claiming that one tribe alone can inhabit a place the size of which matches that of Tunisia, for example. In fact, the mode of ancient tribal settlement in Yemen did not know this kind of exclusive possession as in "all the highland" (וכל ה מישר) . Therefore, rightly scrutinizing the expression will explain the intended place and bring an end to

the confusion. The tribe was awarded its habitations by Moses west of ha-Yeriden, not Jordan, and settled in a specific valley, not in “all the highland”. There is a great difference between the two intentions. This Wadi Mayser still exists in its Torah’s name in the region of Bartha‘a near Heed Samar in the governorate of Abyan and it is inhabited by al-Mayaser tribes who belong to the Duthayna tribes – Mithhij tribes – in the same geographic space of the other places mentioned in Joshua’s text. It is known that Abyan is located at 427 Km’s away from the capital city of Sanaa. It is also connected with the two governorates of Shabwa and al-Baydaa from the north, while it is bordered by the Arab Sea from the south and by Lahaj and Aden from the west. To understand this, the reader can look into the map of Yemen and see the kind and nature of the Israeli tribe Reuben, for they had settled inside a specific geographic area known today by the names of Abyan, al-Baydaa, Taez and Lahaj. Is it meaningless that the inhabitants of these cities are historically referred to as al-Rabi‘yyin – Reuben? We also know that the Yemenis, like many southern Arabs, pronounce the letter “*ayn*” as “*a*”.

Maydaba, which was wrongly read as Madaba, is Wadi Maythab (Mithab), the waters of which run into Maareb Dam together with Wadi Athnah (Ithnat in Musnad inscriptions and Aznat (אזנת) in the Torah). In Musnad inscriptions, Wadi Mithab is written as *Maydab*. It springs out of al-Musaynia‘a region together with other valleys (Sara‘, Khimar). This region is considered one of the largest regions of the governorate of Shabwa. The most important valleys of the governorate of Shabwa that stream towards the desert and flow in Sanaa are the two valleys of Athnah and Mithab. On the banks of Wadi Athnah the city of Maareb, capital of the Sabaites, had risen.

In this frame, the Torah scholars thought that the name of the other place was Sour, which was imagined to be the Lebanese Sour (Tyre) although they knew very well that this is impossible, for there had never been a single tribe inhistory that had been able to occupy an area extending from Sour (Tyre) in Lebanon to Madaba in Jordan. They also know that Hebrew lacks the letter "dh", where it is replaced by the letter "s", knowing that Lebanese Sour (Tyre) has nothing to do with any of the aforementioned places. We had seen that the inscriptions place Mayfa'a of the Torah in the vicinity of Sanaa (Sanaa's field, according to *al-Ikleel*, 1: 414). Does not this mean that the geographic stage of the story of the crossing is totally different from the geography of Jordan? We shall ascertain this when we read a sentence in the text saying that the habitations of the Israeli tribe were in "חשבון וכל עריה אשר ב מישר ודיבון" (*Hashbon wa kul Araha asher bi misher wa dibon*). The precise translation of this part of the text is that the tribe had lived in the land of "Hashbon and all its houses in Wadi Miser and Mount Diben." We notice here that the Hebrew text uses the version of Dibon (דיבון) in stead of Diben (דיבן), which is the classical Hebrew structure that makes it closer to its Arabic structure. There is what clearly tells that the habitations of the Hashbonites (al-Hawasheb) were in a well-known place. There is certainly no mountain or valley to the west of River Jordan where a tribe called the Hashbonites (al-Hawasheb) had settled.

In addition, the other site, Shabmah (Yashbem), is there in the same place. Telling about Saru Mathhij, al-Hamdani precisely describes Wadi Shabmah (p. 188) as Yashbem.[57] In order to help the none-specialized reader follow the path, we shall take all this in detail one place after another.

57 Al-Hamadani says, "Jardan is a great valley with many villages. Yashbem is a great valley for Eezon of Himyar and Hujr ibn Wahb."

The pre-Islamic poet Zuhayr ibn Abi-Salmah had descrtibed Wadi Yashbem (Shabmah) in the following verses:

*The butlers had mixed the glass of wine*

*With Labna's*[58]*water that made it clear not turbid*

*I am still watching them until the moment*

*When the camels were parked in a plain land*

Wadi Yashbam is located in the directorate of al-Sae'ed, governorate of Shabwa that is next to Maareb. It is exactly to the west of ha-Yeriden (see the map of Yemen). Yashbam is considered one of its largest valleys, the name of which is thought to be after King Yashbam. Some historians and archeologists claim that it is the oldest city in Arabia. The valley is also considered one of the greatest valleys, being more than 22 Km's long, starting from al-Sae'ed until it flows into Wadi Habban, at the city of Habban, forming with Wadi Huda the most important tributary of Wadi Mayfa'a that runs into the Arab Sea. This valley includes the valleys of Yashbam, Habban and Mayfa'a. It is distinguished with its depth and strong declivity. The waters of all these valleys flow into it throughout its course. It is also distinguished with the complexity of the composition of its rocks that include the whole region. In addition, it includes historic ruins, graves and remnants of ancient settlements. The name of Yashbam was mentioned in an ancient Musnad inscription[59] in the form of *Yashbamtn* that refers us to the Hebrew structure of names. Some archeologists believe that this inscription dates back shortly before the Nativity. It is about the alliance between the people of Yashbam with the tribes of Kholan Jadad,

58 Notice the name of *Labna* in the poem, which is *libna* in the Torah and *libnan* in the inscriptions.

59 Iryani, 76.

which confirms to us that the Israeli tribes that lived together in one neighborhood were allied and fighting at the same time, the same like the tribes of al-*A'ariba* Arabs. It seems that al-Iryani had doubted the validity of the inscription because of the long distance between the place where it had been found and Wadi Yashbam. This, however, does not minimize the geographic truth or the value of the inscription. Yashbam was also mentioned in an inscription preserved at the museum of Bayhan under number *M.B. 659*. The owner of the inscription, Hofi'm ibn Maqna'em ibn Thajr, refers to his assumption of the supervision of Yashbam Gate. It seems that Yashbam Gate was meant to refer to the status of the valley in the economic a commercial life, for it is erected over mountainous peaks to the right and left of the valley. (Gate here means a tax center.) What makes one believe that the gate, composed of four towers, used to refer to what was known as the gates of Yemen and Syria. It used to play the role of observing the commercial and duty lines. Its being in a high place at the peak of the mountain does not seem understood except in the context of understanding the nature of the valley as a commercial center. Thus, we know from Joshua, al-Hamadani, the pre-Islamic poetry and the Musnad inscriptions that the tribe of Raobeen had inhabited a geographic space that actually extends from Mayfa'a till Shabwa. In this context, and only in the specific meaning here, the name of Sour (Dhour) was mentioned. There is no place with this name, neither near Madaba nor in the whole geography of Jordan. This Dhour, however, is none but Dhouran, according to the way it is written in the Musnad inscriptions. It is one of the Yemeni fortresses well-known for its abundance of water. It is located near a series of places that have been mentioned in the Torah. As we have seen before, it is the traditional Yemeni pronunciation of the name Dhour. This name Dhouran is an ancient Himyari one; it

is today one of the directorates of the governorate of Thimar and is located in its northwestern part. It is bordered from the north by the governorate of Sanaa (the directorate of al-Rous and that of Bani Mattar - Rous and Matara in the Torah). In fact, nothing has been left of the ancient city, for it was destroyed in 1982 by an earthquake. Outside its site, a new city was built with the same name in the region of Bakeel. Called Dhouran Anas today, Mount Dhouran still exists bearing the glory of the city.

Now, let us look for Dhour in Musnad inscriptions. In a very important inscription,[60] we read the following text, as understood by its analyzers: “They raided and took captives. And they raided Hajar, Mikhlaf and Soran. They marched forward and battled with Soran’s comrades in the suburbs of Mikhlaf - Hajar Soar-n, and they hit Thu Jadan and Jisha (the legendry King Thu Jadan) with commotion and they took prisoners-of-war. And they raided A‘rr and its inhabitants until they reached Dimon.”

This and other inscriptions, found in the region of al-Kasr in Hadramawt, were given special care by the archeologists, as well as by the students of higher learning in the Yemeni universities. A scientific study of this region, which is rich with inscriptions, can definitely prove the importance of our approach, because the events narrated by Joshua seem to be a kind of connection with following events in the same place. It is a pity that most of these studies[61] had stopped or had taken only one period from the 7th century BC until the 6th century AD, although it is a period of time with many references to the region through mentioning names of tribes, some of which still

60 Iryani 32: Zayd Ali 87.

61 Mir‘ee Mubarak A‘edh ibn Ruba‘a, a college paper, University of Aden, 2006.

keep the same names mentioned in the inscriptions of the period before the Nativity, like the tribes[62] of Hadramawt, Siban, al-Lou, and Reeben. Requirements of historical research, however, stipulate studying the previous periods. We notice in the names of the tribes in this text the relationship between the Hebrew name Reuben and Reeben. In addition to these tribes, some of the villages and valleys of al-Kasr region were mentioned, like the village of Anf (Alf in the Torah), a famous mountain, Wadi Nasam and the village of Mithab, called today Wadi Haridhah, which is not Wadi Mithab that we had dealt with at length. As for the period in the centuries after the Nativity, it seems that the region is not mentioned any more in the inscriptions, or perhaps the inscriptions that had mentioned it had been pilfered by the travelers and the explorers. In the second decade of the third century AD, as mentioned in al-Mi‘sal inscriptions, the name of the city of Dhoran appeared once again with the events of rebellion by the tribes of Hadramawt led by the tribal chief Yahbaer against the Hadrami king al-I‘zz (Yalat), together with the following events leading to capturing him, destroying the capital Shabwa and seizing the throne of the kingdom of Hadramawt.[63] What remained of the name of Dhoran today is but a branch valley called Wadi Dhoran, the water of which streams into Wadi Doa‘n (as in the Torah). What can be noticed in this inscription is that it writes the name of Dhoran as Soran, like in Joshua, which is what we shall see in following texts. We had already seen that Mayfa‘a, with which we had started analyzing Joshua's text is in the field of Sanaa. Here is Dhoran in Thimar.

Now, let us take the next place, Sarrah – Shahar.

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62 Names of other tribes, too, like: al-Sadaf, Jadmamn, Yahbaer, Thu Hujoum, Rami (i.e. Iram), Ja‘sham and al-Qatham.

63 Mir‘ee Mubarak A‘edh ibn Ruba‘a, *Op.Cit.*

In the Arabic print of the Torah, the name is written with the letter "sh": Shahar. This name, "Sarrah – Shahar", was wrongly considered as one compound name, although the Torah's text is not punctuated. Therefore, they are names of two places: Sarrah and Sahar. Al-Shahar is a plotted out ancient valley in Yemen that had been recorded by al-Hamadani. The Yemeni linguist version, Thu Sahar, attracts one's attention, because the Yemenis had used it as a month, which may mean that originally it was a god known by the name Thu Sahar, after which the valley, the tribe, the month and one of their kings were named. This is something quite familiar in the behaviour of the tribes. They used to give the names of their gods to some places with which they associated themselves. It is also familiar in the history of civilizations, like the names of the Roman months that had been after the Roman Caesars. Prof. Jawad Ali had noticed this when he wrote the following: "The dates in the southern Arab writings, especially al-Qatbaniyya, are in this mode: "*wa rakhas Thu Sahar kharaf*", meaning "he dated in [the month of] Sahar." It is noticed that "*warakh*" and "*torikh*" are close to Yerikho (Jericho) in the Torah, which is the name of the god of the moon that was the source of the lunar calendar. Besides, *Yerikho* is closer to the dialect of the tribe of Tameem, as they say: *warrakhtu* (for I dated), in stead of *arrakhtu*. The letter "s" in *rakhas*, is an indefinite article. After the date follows the name of the month, like "*thu tamna'*" and "*thu sahar*". The word "*kharf*" (*khareef*) follows the month as it means "year" in southern Arabic. After that, the name of the king or the man who had defined the date is mentioned: "*kharaf Shahr Yakel*", meaning the year of "*Shahr Yakel*", being one of Qatban's kings; and so forth for the kings or other people.[64] This is what will bring us back to the core of the concept that we had recorded

64 Jawad Ali, 1/46.

about A‘aber. For the practical objective of imagining him as a human being and the sequence of his offspring may have been used in the context of adulating him as an ancient god whose worship had been linked with the rituals of sanctifying water, i.e. the ancient baptism. It is possible to reach Wadi Sahar today in the directorate of A‘ns of Thimar, through the mountainous U‘zlat Wadi al-Harr, where an archeological village bearing the name Thu Sahar[65] is there. The name A‘ns was mentioned as is in the Torah and in the texts of the Egyptian campaigns (Karnak Temple)[66] . A‘ns is the name of a tribe and a large *mikhlaf* in the governorate of Thimar in North Yemen, i.e. what is known as A‘ns, Maghreb A‘ns and Mayafa‘at A‘ns west of the city of Thimar at 95 Km's south of Sanaa. Thimar is a large and an old city said to be named after Thimar A‘li Yahbar, king of Saba and Thu Ridan (15-35 AD). Among the historical villages that had been surrounded with defensive walls were the villages of Thu Sahar A‘yshan, known as A‘yshan, the name of which had been mentioned in the Torah as A‘yshan, Rakhmah and Thu Khawlan,[67] which was imagined to be the Syrian Golan, and

65 "Thu" is an archaic definite article in Arabic, replaced by "al". Today it means "owner".

66 The famous historian ,Israel finkelstien , assures that biblical Exodus as recounted in the exodus happened, but rather the Egyptians ruled palestine during that period and that it was they who eventually left, though gradually.There is much material evidence scattered across the country. A prominent example of the Egyptian regime in palestine is the large Ramses fortress, the remains of which are hidden beneath the hilltop of Old Jaffa

67 The most famous of Khawlan Mountains is Mount al-Lawz (Lawzah in the Torah), al-Tayyal mountains and Mount A‘dhiyya, which form a series of mountains extending from the east to the west. And then Mount Kanan in the southwest at about 50 Km's away from Sanaa. The directorate of Khawlan is famous for its almonds orchards, especially in Mount al-Lawz and Mount al-A‘nab in Wadi Misour, also in al-Kabs and al-A‘roush (al-A‘rsh in the Torah). In the eastern sides of Khawlan live nomad bedouins who tribally belong to Khawlan. Khawlan is one of the directorates of the governorate of

Khirbat Afeeq, Afeeq in *the Song of Songs* - wrongly attributed to Solomon - and Halqah. This means that it is in a geographic space that is completely harmonious with the Torah's texts.[68] Many of the Himyari inscriptions found lately, including the primitive ones written in Mihrath calligraphy, have changed much of our information about the ancient history of Yemen, like *Moretti Mariya* Inscription, found on the wall of one of the modern Mariya houses (the old Samaan City), as well as *Masna'at Mariya* Inscription. They are part of the inscriptions found in archeological Mariya. We believe that the discovery of *Masna'at Mariya* should encourage the Arab scholars to rebuild a new conception about the Syrian Mariya Kingdom over the Euphrates to rid themselves of the trifles of the archeologists of the Torah stream. The first inscription of Mariya dates back to the time of the Himyari King Shammar Yamhamad (Yahhamad) king of Saba and Thu Ridan who had ruled the Himyari territories in the first half of the 3rd century AD. During his time, the Himyaris had encountered numerous attacks from two rival kings in Saba and Thu Ridan, namely El Sharh Yakhsub II and his brother Yazel Been. The second inscription dates back to the time of King Tharan Yahna'am ibn Thimar A'li Yahbar in the year 319 AD. Here, I wish to reemphasize that the name of King Yazel Been had been mentioned in the Torah as the name of a king in Hasour (Hadhour). The translators, however, did not understand that it was the name of a king, thinking that it was a place. The inhabitants of Masna'at Mariya and the archeological

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Sanaa, with Jahanah as its center. Khawlan is the name of the tribe as well as the territory. The name Kholan was mentioned for the first time in the ancient Yemeni inscriptions as the name of a tribe around the 7th century BC. In the period of the kings of Saba and Thu Ridan between the 1st century AD till the 3rd, it was called Kholan Jadan.

68 There is also another village with the same name east of Sanaa (about 5 Km's away) within the archeological A'ffash Fortress. Some Yemenis claim that Queen Balqis was born in the village of Thu Sahar.

village of Sahar still narrate many legends about the secrets and treasures of the city. Some old people in Thu Sahar believe of the existence of hidden precious, royal, treasures that have not been discovered. As for Surrah (Seerah), it refers to a mountainous place. As Wadi Sahar is within Wadi Thimar, it means that Wadi Surrah (Seerah) must be in the same place; and here is Surrah (Seerah).

Wadi al-Seerah is located in Higher Wissab – Bani Shua'yb within Thimar. Wissab is divided into two directorates: Higher and Lower Wissab. They are two of the directorates of the governorate of basic Thimar. It is a large series of mountainous regions permeated by agricultural valleys and coastal plains. There is another mountain called Mount Seerah that belongs to Aden. What is interesting is that some inhabitants of Wadi Sahar are called the Rabee's (*al-Rabee'yyeen*), which prompts us to compare it anew with Raobeen. It is the name of a Yemeni tribe mentioned in Musnad inscriptions as Reeben, the remains of which still exist in Yemen. We had seen in a previous inscription that the inhabitants of the great Wadi Yashbem were allies with Khawlan. We believe that this can clearly and undoubtedly show the fact that the Israeli tribe Raobeen is the right pronunciation of Rabi'yyeen – Reebeen,[69] exactly like the case with the other tribe Jad – Jadad that of the peoples of Khawlan, or the name

69 In al-Hamadadni's description of the Abyan region, we read the following about al-Rabi'yyeen and their habitation: "Abyan starts with Shawkan, a large village with valleys. It belongs to al-Asbahis (Asbahiyyeen) and the large city Khanfar, which also belongs to al-Asbahis and people from Bani Majeed, called al-Haramiyyeen as well as to people from Mith-hij called al-Zifriyyeen. Al-Mudhari is a village inhabited by al-Asbahiyyeen, al-Ruwa'a is inhabited by Bani Majeed, al-Masna'a is inhabited by al-Asbahiyyeen, al-Jasheer is inhabited by al-Asbahiyyeen, al-Taryah is inhabited by al-A'amiriyyeen sons of al-Ashras, al-Badirah is inhabited by people called al-Rabi'yyeen from Kahlan, al-Jathwah is also inhabited by al-Rabi'yyeen." It is noticed in this text that the Palestinian family Khanfar is related to the Yemeni place Khafar.

of the tribe Asheer – Ash'ar, being the Ash'aris (Ash'ariyyeen) one of the strongest Yemeni tribes that, together with the tribes of A'kk and Kinanah, had inhabited the Red Sea cost.[70] This is what was confirmed by al-Hamadani: "From this island, where they had inhabited and multiplied, Arabia was considered by Arabs and their poetry of five sections: Tihama, Hijaz, Najd, al-A'roudh and Yemen. For Mount al-Sarah, which the greatest and most famous of Arabia's mountains, extends from Yemen's heart until Syria's desert, which the Arabs had called Hijaz because it separated between the depression and the upper land. Behind that mountain to the west until the sea are the territories of al-Ash'aris, A'kk, Hakam, Kinanah and others until That I'rq, al-Juhfa and what is adjacent to it of the depression of Tihamah." What is interesting to us regarding this point is that the Torah, in numerous texts, talks literarily about the same tribes: al-Ash'aris, A'kk, and the sons of Kan'an (sons of Kinanah) as tribes that had inhabited adjacent coastal territories. Therefore, one has to enquire about the actual locations of the places that Joshua had called Hajour, Bohen and Raobeen, as the separating line between the territories of this tribe and those of other tribes.

70 It seems that, with the separation of Qadha'ah Tribe, the Rabi'is (Rabi'yyeen) had been separated so that branches of them inhabited Abyan, while others remained between Sa'adah and Maareb. We should differentiate here between Khawlan the Mikhlaf and Upper Khawlan (the tribe). The following text is taken form Yaqoot al-Hamawi's *Mu'jam al Buldan* (*Dictionary of Cities*), p.69, Vol. 5, where he explains this in precise clarity: "As for Mushref Sanaa, located between this city and Maareb, it is Mikhlaf of Khawlan ibn A'mr ibn Malek ibn al-Hareth ibn Murra ibn Adad. They are Upper Khawlan that had been mentioned by the Prophet, who had differentiated between it and Khawlan of Qadha'a, saying, 'May God bless al-Sakasek and al-Sukoon as well as al-Amlook of Radman and Upper Khawlan.'" Miklaf of Khawlan is linked to that of their brothers Thu Jarrah ibn Raklan ibn Omar ibn Malek ibn al-Hareth ibn Murra ibn Adad ibn Janobiyyah to what touches the city of A'bs, al-Hithaa of Murad, Miklaf of Thu Jarra, Khawlan, called Yemen's cupboard, Thimar, Rae'en and al-Suhool, called Yemen's Egypt, for barley and wheat remain in these places for a long time. He said, 'I found in Mount Misour some 30-year old wheat that did not change.' It is a large mikhlaf with many valleys and villages,"

Joshua says, “You ascend in front of Hajour and Bohen and Bani Raobeen.”

Regarding this part of the text, the translators, the editors and the authors of the bible claim that this location is in Palestine. In the dictionary, “Hajar – Bohan – Raobeen is a Hebrew name meaning Ibham, a Raobeeni man (15:6 and 18:17). Hajar (stone of) Bohan was the landmark of the borders between Judea and Benjamin, not much far from Jordan (15:6 and 18:17). We notice that the authors of the religious dictionary did not notice that the Hebrew text is not punctuated and what it mentions are three places not one. What do we understand from this?[71]

The reason behind this unscientific definition of the places mentioned in the Torah and the arbitrary insistence on their location in Palestine is only to prove the possibility of identifying the geography of the Torah with that of East Jordan through claiming that Hajar (Bohan) is a real place that separates the territories of Judea from Ben-Yamen of Jordan. This is extremely imaginative, because the text speaks frankly

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71 The name of Bohen is that of an archeological place in Nuba, south of Egypt, particularly on the western side of the Nile near Wadi Halfa. It is said to have the remnants of a temple for the Egyptian kings Hatshabsot and Tuhutmus III. It also has the remnants of a temple that belongs to the modern state. Is it possible to claim that Raobeen’s habitations had extended to Egypt? In fact, the historical origin of the name goes back to one of strangest trees in Yemen in Suqatra Island that nothing looks like it called Bohen, the scientific name of which is *Stercula Africana*. It is a big longevous tree, the trunk of which is bluish, broad and smooth, with high, ramified branches. Its leaves are green and soft and used as feed for camels and cattle. From its inside, a sweet, honey-like juice is extracted. The name Bohen is mostly derived from the word Boh, meaning copious water. The nearest place to Suqatra is Sarat Khawlan, where there is a place called A‘dd Boh. Does this explain to us the real meaning of Joshua’s discourse that the habitations of the Israelite tribe were located near the borders of Hajour region? Certain it is that in the geography of River Jordan there is no place with such a name, while it is known in the geography of the Kingdom of Mikhlaf Khawlan as Hajour and A‘dd Boh (Bohen).

about Sarat Najab, Wadi Hajla, Wadi Mithab, Haom, Kitaf and Bayt Boos. All these places are found in Saada and the vicinity of Sanaa and Thimar. Joshua literarily says (15:7-28):

"ועלה הגבול, בית חגלה, ועבר, מצפון לבית הערבה; ועלה הגבול, אבן בהן בן-
ראובן ....ועלה הגבול גי בן-הנם, אל-כתף היבוסי מנגב--היא, ירושלם"

*"You ascend to Hajala's house and pass north of Araba house, and then ascend to Hajour, Bohan, Sons of Raobeen and Hanom to Kitaf and to Yaboos from its side, and then you will be in Jerusalem."*

Now let us compare the above text with that of al-Hamadani (pp. 127-130):

*"And then Sarat U'thr and Hanom link with this Sarah ... and then it is connected with Sarat Khawlan ... and A'dd Boh followed by Sarat Janb."*

The question that must be asked to discuss Joshua's text is the following: where can we find north of the Jordanian Wadi A'raba all these names? Can we reach Jerusalem from the north of this valley through Hajour, Hanom and Bayt Boos? Of course not; because from the Jordanian state there is no road to Jerusalem through Bayt Boos, Mount Hanom, Wadi Hajour and Sarat Janb. In the geography of Yemen, we have indeed Sarat Janb connected with Sarat Hanom together with the waters of Boh. The place is to the west of Wadi Yerid - Yeriden (i.e. Wadi Mour) near which the tribe of Yerid - Yeriden ibn Mahlaeel had inhabited one day. This is what supports our understanding of the Hebrew word *gaboul* (גבול), which we believe to mean *hajour* (heights), or *qabel*, in al-Hamadani's gepgraphic language, not borders, as in the prevalent translation. This Sarat Janb is the end

of Sarat Khawlan as heights. Today, it is called Sarat A‘beedah, as in the Torah. In the texts related to the Captivity, the name of these people is mentioned together with the name of Salamah – Shalamah as A‘beed – Shalamah. The editors wrongly thought it to mean *a‘beed* (slaves) of King Solomon. Hajour is exactly like in the Hebrew wording. Take the following marvelous description:

The governorate of Hajjah (as in the Torah) - from which the Arabic word *hajja* - meaning traveling was derived, was known in the past by the name of Hajour. Its topography is divided into series of mountainous heights, like the series of mountains of al-Sharafayn, Hajour, Kahlan, Wash-ha, Kashar and others. It includes also wide coastal plains in Bani Qays. We know from the Torah that the founder of the Israelite kingdom was called Saul ibn Qays. Those mountains overlook what is called al-Tour, where the water stream of Wadi La‘ah and the region of A‘bs (as in the Egyptian records). It is a fertile plain extending into the sea in 50 Km’s. To the east of it there is a series of plateaus connected to the plateaus of Hajour and then to Midi (like in the Torah, which was understood to be Persian Midia.)

Following is a description of A‘raba from the north (notice Joshua’s text: north of A‘raba):

The second section of the valleys of the governorate of Mahrah runs northward into the desert of the Empty Quarter. There is a large number of valleys, namely (from the west to the east) Wadi al-Manaheel, Wadi Arma, the water of which gathers from the northern mountain of Ibn Kasheet, Wadi Dhahiyya and Wadi Tahoof. The water of these two valleys gathers into the water of the northern mountain of Ibn Kasheet, and then the two

valleys of Marakhya and A‘raba, into which the water of Mount Ibn Kasheet gathers and runs into the Empty Quarter in Tawq Shahar.

Going back to the map of Yemen and considering the valleys and the mountains in the interconnected governorates is sufficient to precisely explain this description. We notice that the text refers to Kitaf, which is the most important and well-known of the valleys of Saadah, it was mentioned in the same wording (Kitaf) in the Torah. We believe, however, that what is meant in the text is Mount Kitaf in Sanaa, on the way to Bayt Boos, or what is known as “Bilad Hashed”, the first of which is the city of La‘ah, to the southwest of Sanaa, and then the two mountains of La‘ah between it and Mount Sardad, known today as Mount Aktaf, which is not Wadi Kitaf in Saada. Hanom is a mountainous series in Shahara in the region of I‘mran near Sanaa. The city of Shahara is considered naturally a mountainous series that is historically known as the series of al-Ahnom Mountains, named after al-Ahnom Tribes who live there. This series of mountains includes the following: Mount Thura (Athra in the Torah), Mount al-Madan (Madan in the Torah), al-Qafla Mountains (Maqfilah in the Torah), I‘shan (as in the Torah), and then Dhulaymah Mountains (Zalma in the Torah), Bani Sawt (as in the Torah). Northward and westward, there is Wadi Mour, descending from Akhraf and al-Batnah (Batonim in the Torah). In the east there is al-U‘saymat Plain (A‘ssam in the Torah) and A‘thr Plain (as in the Torah).

Every reader can follow by himself these places in Joshua’s text by using the map of Yemen. He can see Saada, Imran and Hajja as contiguous governorates. Byt Boos is a strong fortress in the far southwest of Sanaa (see the map). It stands on a rocky, gorgeous height, where houses had been

built on its peak with the mountain's stones in the shape of a solemn rocky crown that reminds its visitors of its old age. In Khawlan, one of the directorates of Sanaa, A'rae'r, is located. We know from historical sources that the campaign of Olius Gallos in south Arabia (125 AD) had reached the far south passing through Najran and Khawlan, but failed because of the resistance encountered on the part of the Yemeni tribes. One of the leaders of Najran from the tribe of Bani al-Hareth ibn Ka'b, however, had welcomed the invaders, perhaps out of religious reasons, for that tribe was Christian. He tried to help them reach the territory of Khawlan and they indeed reached A'rareen, albeit after much difficulty (about 150 miles west of Najran). Most probably the campaign had reached Khawlan and Wadi Mithab, thence Wadi Dimaj to the east near Saadah. This road from Wadi Hajalah in al-Dhale' to Wadi Kitaf in Saadah southwest of Sanaa is still used today. If we walk in the valleys and over the mountains mentioned in Joshua's description, we shall see the same valleys, mountains and water, and we shall easily reach Byt Boos Fortress that stands high on the mountain. What is astonishing in Joshua's description is that he uses the expression *hissn* (fortress) in describing Byt Boos. There is no other place in the world that may geographically identify with this description except this place, where Byt Boos is adjacent to Sanaa forming a strong fortress over the peak of a mountain. This is the road taken by David to the Yemeni Jerusalem. We had already seen that some of the habitations of Raobeen Tribe, according to the Torah, are located near Wadi Hanom in the governorate of Imran adjacent to Sanaa. the Torah scholars had vainly looked in the whole of Palestine for any trace of a name, linguistic or geographic remains, from which one could understand that it meant Hanom or Bayt Boos. At the same time, we find the high Hanom Mountains in this geographic space, the way the fortress of Bayt Boos stands beautifully high.

The series of Hanom Mountains (Sarat A‘thr and Hanom) is administratively located within the city of Shahara at 140 Km’s to the northwest of Sanaa and at 90 Km’s to the north of Imran city, capital of the governorate. It is possible to reach the city through a road that passes by the city of Houth (as in the Torah). This is in addition to the existence of other mountains, like Mount Shahara that is 3,000 meters above sea level, as well as the western and eastern Mount Seeran. In a study by a student[72] at the University of Sanaa with the purpose of getting acquainted with the factors affecting the surface and the rock composition of the region, as well as the nature of the collapse of rocks, it was noticed that this *sarat* (height) still has the same historical importance as in the past. Al-Ahnom Heights are located northwest of Sanaa between the two horizontal lines (16 00 – 16 18) degrees north and the two longitudinal lines (43 36 – 43 47) degrees east. It is considered part of the northwestern heights of Yemen. What about Torah’s A‘roe‘ir mentioned in Joshua’s list? The translators of the Hebrew text had written the name as *A‘roe‘ir*, while al-Hamadani had written it as *A‘ra‘r*. Today it is pronounced as *A‘rae‘r*. It is a copious stream of water located within the administrative borders of the governorate of al-Dhale‘, directorate of al-Shua‘yb, known as U‘zalat al-Shua‘yb, and is called the city of A‘rae‘r. Walking in this height, one will enter Sarat Janb thence the city of A‘rae‘r (see the list). Finally, the traveler through this height can pass through Manqal Sifren (Sifr) that the tribe of Kalb had inhabited (note the ancient “n” in the name.) A precise revision of al-Hamadani’s text will reveal a fabulous and perfect identity with that of Joshua. It gives us the same names, like Wadi al-A‘rab and Yaboos, the ancient Jerusalem that David had entered. As for al-Rubu‘ in Joshua’s list, it is Wadi al-Rubu‘, as it is called today. Administratively,

72 An MA thesis by Muhammad N.Q. al-Bakri, in 2005.

it is within the directorate of Bani Matar of the governorate of Sanaa. In the past, this place was within the mikhlafs of Haraz, Hawzan and Hadhour. Hawzan and Haraz are intermixed on the western side with the territory of La‘san of A‘kk, where Wadi Himdh in Sarat al-Kula’a is located. Wadi Mathikh is also called Wadi al-Rubu‘. It is famous for planting Yemeni coffee. This is Wadi al-Rab‘ (al-Rubu‘), according to our verification of the same place described by Joshua of the habitations of Raobeen (Rabi‘yyeen). It is possible that the valley had been given their name or they had been named after the valley. As we had seen from the Torah’s text that the tribe’s habitations had been near Wadi al-Hajalah – see the aforementioned text about Yohen’s stone – this means that the rest of the habitations will be there.

Following is al-Hamadani’s description of the valleys of Mikhlaf Radman east of the city of Thimar (pp. 186-188):

> *“Al-budha‘ are valleys that include Hawran, Ruwaf, Qayina ... and seven large valleys including al-Hijla. We come back to the right-hand features: al-Saru road Bani Aradh who belong to U‘llah and Thu al-Thuwayb is a large valley that belongs to Yafi‘ ... Yashbem is a great valley that belongs to al-Izon of Himyar and Hajar ibn Wahb.”*

Here is the region of Hajar ibn Wahb, which is a place other than Hajour, but carries all the phonetic and indicative elements. Here is also the great valley mentioned by Joshua by the name of Yahbemah – Yashbem. It is located exactly near Wadi Hajalah. Here is also Wadi Ruwaf (Rafaeem in the Torah). Mentioned in the ancient inscriptions, the historic city of Yashbem is located on the right hand side of the valley after which it was named in the city of al-Sae‘ed in the governorate of

Shabwa. It is distinguished with its clay buildings of five and six stories. Yabshem is one of the most important directorates in the governorate of Shabwa. Its capital is the city of al-Sae‘ed that is located on the upper side of the valley at 45 Km’s to the south of the city of A’taq. It is a beautiful city with its clay buildings. The modern city is surrounded with grapes trees on both banks of the valley, where the villages, the houses, the palaces and the archeological sites exist. There are still old, deep-rooted tribes living in that territory called al-A‘waleq. Here is Wadi Hawran that is mentioned in the list as Hawr. The Torah’s Wadi Hawr - Hawran is located near Wadi Hajalah, as we have seen in Joshua’s text. With a quick review of the Torah’s text, we find that this description identifies well with al-Hamadani’s description of the same place and the geography of the land inhabited by the Israelite tribe, in addition to U‘llah and Bani Aradh in the Torah, as well as Wadi Ruwaf – Rafaeem.

Now, let us go back to Hashbon for more necessary details.

The Hebrew text (Joshua 14: 17) the following sentence:

(וחשבן וכל עריה אשר ב מישר דיבן וב מות בעל)

It was translated this way in the Arabic text of the Torah:

*“And Hashbon and all its houses that are in Miser and Deeben and in Mot Ba‘l.”*

This translation is strange because it makes it impossible to understand the whole text. The name “Mot” was written as “بموت” (*bimawt* – by the death, in Arabic). That is why it was impossible to understand the sentence, something that had perplexed the searchers for the Promised Land in Palestine;

for what does "*bimawt*" mean here? In fact there is no place called *bamawt*, and the right translation is: "in Wadi Moth Ba'l", for Hebrew lacks the letter "th". This is a place called Moth described as Ba'l, i.e. being rich with water. Today it has its Torah's name, Wadi Moth in Uzlat Hajjaj of the directorate of Jubn that administratively belongs to the governorate of al-Dhale'. Because of its copious water, a dam had lately been built there. One can imagine the significance of the description, being *ba'l* because of its copious and continuous water throughout these centuries. In this valley there is an ancient village having the same name, with an area of 1250 Km2, the inhabitants of which are more than 60,000. It comprises, therefore, one third of the governorate and it is spread over six main uzalas. It is bordered by Rada' from the north, by al-Shua'yb and Yafi' from the south, by al-Baydaa from the east and by Damt (as in the Torah) from the west. We believe that the name of the god Ba'l generally refers to copious water. In the inscriptions, it was mentioned as the god of Khawlan tribe. In the Musnad inscriptions, and in connection with the rituals of worshipping the great national Yemeni god, al-Maqah, in the territories of Maareb, al-Jawf, Sanaa, Imran and its suburbs, there is what confirms that it is the god of water for the ancient people. In this case the sentence (וב-מות בעל) is translated as: "and in Moth with its copious water."

We find important references to Ba'l in the inscriptions of Sarwah Khawlan Temple (*CIH.398, CIH.397, CIH.579, Fa.9, RES.3649 and RES.4149 Robin Sirwah.* 7), as well as in the following image (*a w a' l / s r u h*). The remains of this temple are still in the same place as Joshua had described. The name was also mentioned in other inscriptions that were found by the American mission that had to do with the location of

Awam Temple in Maareb, called today Balqis' sanctuary, where explorations had been regularly performed, (*Ja.560, Ja.735, Ja.565 Ir.9 ets*, as well as *CIH.400* and *Ja.534*.) and where we find the same version (*a l ma qa h / B a' l / A w m*). This means that the name Ba'l is related to the name of the sanctified place. For all this, we look carefully into the inscription of the temple (*b r a n*) in Maareb, where the name Ba'l is recorded as (*a l ma qa h / B a' l / b r a n*), i.e. the god Ba'l-al-Maqah, the creator, the healer. In the two temples of (*y th / w m s k t*) in Maareb, near Bar-an Temple, Ba'l was mentioned in the two inscriptions (*CIH.314* and *CIH.954*) in the version (*a l ma qa h / B a' l / m s k t /w y th w / b r a n*). The archeologists had also found an inscription in the temple (*g b l t*) in Wadi Athnah (Athnat in the Torah), in connection with the name of the tribe (*m y d a' m / w a' l t / a th n t*) *Ja.560, Gl.1732* where the name of Ba'l was mentioned. It was also found in a late inscription at the temple (*s b a' m*) in Sarwah Khawlan *CIH.405 / 4,5,6* as (*a l m q h / b a' l / s b a' m*), near which was the phrase (*h w r / h g r n /s r o h*) that confirms that the temple is located in Hur. Compare it with Hur in Joshua, which is not a mere linguist coincidence. There is another interesting version for the name Ba'l that appears in the religious Musnad inscriptions, namely Ba'l Hronem at the temple (*h r o n m*) in Sarwah Khawlan (*Ir. 31*), the text of which is the following: (*a l m q h / th h o n / b a'l / h r o n m* ). All these versions where the god Ba'l appears confirm that he had practically shared the god al-Maqah. As we had seen that the god al-Maqah was the same god al-Makha (Maka in the Torah) and that Mecca had been named after al-Makha (al-Maka), i.e. the god of the brain (Mikhail/Michael are also of the same origin), it is interesting indeed that the god of water shares unified rituals with the god of the brain, which reminds us of worshipping Habal (ha-Ba'l) in Mecca, being the

god of water and the brain (the seven *qadahs* (sticks) in Mecca indicate brain and water, etc.)[73] This is confirmed by two other inscriptions,[74] where the version (*a l m q h /w th o r / b a' l m / b a'l I / a w m / w h r o n m* ) was mentioned. This is the god Ba'l and that is the village of Moth, where the habitations of al-Hawasheb (al-Hashboniyyeen) are located in Khawlan. When we go back to the list of Raobeen Israeli tribe's habitations, we notice the existence of the name of Mount Dibon – Diben as the place inhabited by the tribe. Following, first, is al-Hamadani's precise definition of the relationship between the places in the list (pp. 217-18):

> *"Regarding the city of Hamadan, it is between al-Ghaet and Tihamah between Najd and al-Sarah ... and Mount Thayban ... it may share in the eastern side of Wadi Mahsam and below it Mount Thayban thence Mithab for Subbara."*

In this brief description - originally it was in detail but we had abbreviated it to make it easier for the reader - it is clear that Mount Dibon is connected with Wadi Mithab - Midba, exactly as in Joshua, which should attract our attention. Is it acceptable to ignore this marvelous identity that Mount Dibon is connected with Wadi Mithab (Midba in Joshua), while Mount Thayban connects with Wadi Mithab in al-Hamadani as well as in modern geography of Yemen? Following is another approach:

| Al-Hamadani (217-18) | Joshua (13: 18: 23) |
|---|---|
| Subrah with Mount Thayban and Mithab | Mount Sabr … all the height at Midba and the habitations in Najd Dibon |

73 These are sticks with which the clergyman beats, having the words the brain, outsider, emedy, waters, etc.

74 RES.3950 Ja.563 & Ir.9 (*a l m q h / b a' l / m a' r b m*).

Mount Thayban is located north of Sanaa in the land of Arhab (Hamadan). It is a homeland and a tribe that is considered one of the largest and most famous of Bakkeel's tribes, together with its historical sister the tribe of Hashed (Hashd in the Torah). In this land of Arhab, there is a historical city that was mentioned in the Torah in the same wording: Kant. On the peak of Mount Thayban in the land of Arhab there are the temples of the god Taleb Riyam, god of the moon, like the temple of Hadtham in the territory of Kant.[75] Kant is a famous region that is rich in its ancient ruins. Administratively, it belongs to the directorate of Kharef (Haref in the Torah) of the land of al-Sayd (Saydon in the Torah) in Khamis al-Qayfi, governorate of Imran, at about 60 Km's northeast of Sanaa. It is about 2,320 meters above sea level. If we compare names and geographic descriptions in the texts of Joshua and al-Hamadani, we shall find that the idea of the Israelite tribes crossing River Jordan and the existence of habitations to its west, where they had settled at the time of Moses, will seem illogical and a typical orientalist fabrication; for it is impossible to find even one place of what Joshua had mentioned. Mount Sabra (Sabr), where the fortified Uzlatt Yameen is located, is in the governorate of Taez and it is considered the second highest mountain (3,060 meters above sea level) after Nabi Shu'ayb Mountain in Sanaa. It is distinguished with the beauty of its agricultural steps and water springs. It is about 256 Km's away from the capital. In this context alone we can look more seriously into forcing Jordanian Madaba into the Old Testament. This fabrication had the purpose of

75 The Territory of Kant had been inhabited thousands of years ago. Temples were built there, hence its holiness. Its temples were built inside the walls of the city, as proved by the many inscriptions that recorded the rituals of worshipping the gods (the holy astral triad: the moon, the sun and Venus). One of the temples in that city was the temple of Hadtham that was consecrated for the god Taleb Riyam.

identifying Palestine and the land of the Torah, in spite of the fact that the name of Madaba has nothing to do with the name of Wadi Maydaba. The prevalent wording in the Arabic prints of the Torah is the product of another forged identity between the name in its Hebrew wording, Madba, and the name of the Yemeni Wadi Mithab. The European reading had imagined that the city of Madaba to the west of River Jordan is the same Madba of the Torah. Strange enough, this identity did not notice that the Jordanian Madaba is in the southeast not the west of Jordan. This reveals the playing in geography as they identify a place to the west of ha-Yeriden with another to the south of Jordan, simply because of the existence of similarity in the structure of the name. Why did this happen?

***Medab of the Torah is not Madaba of Jordan***

As the European reading imagined that the Sons of Israel had crossed River Jordan, it is natural for Madba in this case to be the Jordanian city of Madaba, even though it is to the south not to the west of the river. The Torah scholars have turned the map of Jordan upside down in order to arbitrarily identify Madba with Madaba, because Wadi Madba is to the west of ha-Yeriden. What claims that the Dead See is mentioned in the Torah is the expression *Yam-ha-Milh*, which refers to two mountains, one is Mount Yam and the other is Mount al-Milh.[76] Jordanian Madaba is located to the southeast of River Jordan. There is not a trace, no matter how small it may be, that may refer to the rest of the places mentioned by Joshua. There are no Hashbonis, to cite an example, nor a mountain called Dibon. There is also no trace of a valley called Wadi Hajalah or Yahs or Yashbem (Shabma). In the context of this fabrication Yashmot

76 *Yam* in Hebrew means sea and *milh* in Arabic means salt. [the translaer]

(al-Shammat) was placed in the same geographic space. Had the writer of the Hebrew text committed another geographic mistake while describing the habitations where the Israelite tribe had lived? Or was there a mistake in reading the names by the editors of the Torah? However, while we are unable to prove the existence of these places in Palestine, we can easily find them in the geographic space of Najd of Yemen when we exit Hamadan taking the direction of Shamateen. Al-Shamateen is considered one of the largest directorates of the governorate of Taez and of Yemen, with a population of 152,486 people, as per the census of 2004. It is about 45 Km's away from the center of the governorate. Its capital is the city of al-Turbah. It has numerous archeological and historical places, like Sharjab, Thabhan, al-hadharem and Adeem (like in the Torah). It is distinguished from the other directorates by its pleasant air and the culture of its inhabitants. The importance of Yashmot (al-Shamateen), as far as we are concerned, lies in its organic relationship with ancient Yemeni history, as it includes numerous archeological sites and fortresses, like the fortress of Jabal Yameen. The existence of the name Yameen shows that the sons of this fortress and mountain had been known as being Bani Yameen (Benjamin), which can be ascertained from the inscriptions. There is also Wadi al-Hajariyyah - see in the list Hajar Raobeen. Mount Yameen is surrounded by a series of fortresses and mountainous places. Al-Shamateen and the region of al-Hajariyyah had been known in the past by the name of al-Ma'afer, which is a mikhlaf and a tribe whose name was mentioned in the inscriptions as Ma'feren,[77] the history of which goes back to the seventh century BCE.

The pre-Islamic poet A'lqama al-Fahl had said:

77 Al-Nasr inscription *RES.3945*.

*I told her one day in Wadi Mubayedh*

*I see that every prisoner except yours is freed*

*And I remembered after having forgotten*

*Habitations that had been hit by strong rain*

*In the neighborhood of Shamat whose remains*

*Are like silver in ornamented skin*

Here is Yameen and here is Yashmot (al-Shamateen). As for Wadi al-Hajala that is mentioned in the list together with other names (Mount Dibon, Wadi Arnon, Mithab, etc.) we shall trace it later. Today it is called Wadi al-Hajaliyyah and it is located to the west of the city of al-Hudaydah and it runs into Wadi Siham. Its water springs out of the mountains of Haraz and Manakhah (Manah in the Torah) in the east. Thence it runs to the southwest of the city of al-Hajaliyyah until it finally reaches Wadi Siham. This city that was named after the ancient valley is located at the northern bank at 5 Km's from the region of Haraz. The governorate of al-Hudaydah is one of the most beautiful governorates of Yemen. It is the bride of the Yemeni coast almost in the middle of it on the eastern coast of the Red Sea. As for Wadi Awi – see the text and the list – it is Wadi Awn, with the extra "n" as per the Kalaee dialect. This valley is one of the valleys that spring out of the homeland of Bulhareth in al-Jawf. They run into al-Khared between Yemen and Najd. Today, the valley and the mountain are called Dukhan. It is a high mountain that separates Saudi Arabia from Yemen on the side of Saadah. In the last years, ferocious battles had taken place between the Saudi forces and the Huthis in Mount Dukhan, where its old name, Awan, was repeated.

And now, let us take the rest of the places and start with Qudmut. Following is al-Hamadani's description of Qudom (Qudmut) and the water of Ma'een (pp.134-5) in the Yemeni Sarah:

*"And it is followed by Wadi Mour, which is the greatest water stream of Tihamah. The streams of Mawr run to the west of Hamadan and then to Suhar and then to Bani Haritha, Hammad, Yerid and Yamad Hajour, and then to A'yan and then to Naml and then to Sharas and then to U'thr and Hanom. In what had been taken of the land of Qudum ibn Qadem ... there is Arab and then Haradh, which is in the middle of the valleys ... until Ma'een."*[78]

If we break down the units of this geographic text into smaller ones, with the purpose of rebuilding them anew, we shall get the following results: ha-Yeriden (i.e. Mour), the greatest of the Yemeni valleys, cleave the territories east and west. Some of its tributaries run to the west of Hamadan. We also notice that Wadi Ma'een of the Torah – Ma'een of today – is within the governorate of Maareb in the directorate of al-Rahbah (Rahbah in the Torah). In this directorate runs the water of Wadi Athanah (Aznat in the Torah). Here is Qudmut of the Torah; that is Qudum, according to the Arabic structure of the name. It is near the habitations where the tribe of Judas (Hud) had lived, like U'thr, Hanom and Sharas. Here to the west is the valley of the tribe of Yerid ibn Mahlaeel (Yeriden). At the southern end of al-Jawf is Yemen's Ma'een. This means that Joshua, al-Hamadani

78 Ma'een is considered one of the great cities in ancient Yemen. The remains of its temples are still alive witness to numerous religions. The ancient Ma'eenis had left a number of inscriptions that tell about 22 kings who had descended from five families that had ruled Ma'een in al-Jawf. Ma'een had waged sever wars with the Kingdom of Saba, some of which had forced Ma'een to surrender. The Ma'eenis, according to the archeologists, are the first to write in al-Musnad in the 12th century BC.

and the pre-Islamic poets were actually describing the same place, the name of which had been recorded by the Torah in its stories about the tribes' habitations. Here, there is no Jordanian Madaba nor is there any existence for the Dead Sea.

The governorate of Maareb is located northeast of Sanaa at about 173 Km's away. Its most important tourist landmarks are its ancient dam and the Sun Temple (the villages of the sun in the Torah), as well as Balqis Sanctuary. Its most important cities are Sirwah and Hurayb (Hareeb in the Torah's story of Moses and the Book of Exodus). Its most famous valleys are Ma'een and Athnah. We must distinguish here between Wadi Ma'een and the Kingdom of Ma'een in al-Jawf. In order to deepen this distinction between the ancient kingdom and its capital (Qarn – Qarnaw) and the valley, we shall mention in brief terms the important data about it, in order to emphasize the great roles played by the makhaleef - the Yemeni kingdoms - in the commercial and political life in the ancient world.

The importance of these data is that they emphasize the historical names of the tribes, like Khawlan. By virtue of the many archeological discoveries, precious information about the kingdom of Ma'een has become available. We shall suffice ourselves with referring to one inscription in the Musnad where the name of Ma'n - Ma'een was mentioned. Following is the text of the inscription:[79]

> *"And he had taken of the properties and acquisitions Saba and Khawlan in the road between Ma'een and Rajmah."*

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79 Bafaqeeh 81: Corpus of South Arabian Inscriptions. http://dasi.humnet.unipi.it/ # 3022.

The text also talks about the Ma‘eeni gods that protected the camels in their return to their homeland, Ma‘een, after a successful and surprising raid committed by attackers from Saba and Khawlan. The ancient kingdom of Ma‘een appeared before the year 700 BC. The archeologists, however, wrongly claim that it had appeared between the years 700 and 50 BC. Ma‘een the kingdom, not the valley, is one of the most ancient Yemeni kingdoms that was known by the name of its capital al-Qarn (Qarnaw) east of Sanaa. The ruins of the temple of the god A‘thtar (A‘shtar) is still there as a witness of the greatness of this kingdom that was well-known in its commerce with Egypt and Mesopotamia. Its economy had depended on agriculture and exporting olibanum and spices. Later, the realm of its hegemony over the region expanded until it included all of Hijaz, Yathreb, al-U‘la, Fadak, Taymaa and al-Hajar, accoriding the records in the inscriotions from Ma‘een. It had also controlled most of the commercial roads in south Arabia. In 2007 AD, Ma‘eeni writings and antiquities dating back to the year 3700 BC were discovered in the region of al-Jawf. The name of the tribe Thamad – Thamoud – Thamadi was mentioned together with that of Ma‘een, which makes one believe that the Ma‘eenis belong to Thamoud. Thus, whatever had remained of the habitations of the tribe of Raobeen, as in Joshua's list, is the place of Qataeem (al-Qaryatayn) that was mentioned in the inscriptioin of Sahmmar Yahra‘ash in the same name.

Following is the translation of the inscription *Jam.649*:

*"With his help, they had taken captives and they stood by their guardian Shammar Yahra‘ash, king of Saba and Thi Ridan. And they marched towards al-Sahrah, Khiwan, Dhad-han, Tanghum and Naba‘ah. And they killed in this raid five lions by the sword and*

*had taken one prisoner-of-war and they knocked down Sadaq and Thi Fara‘, at the army front. In this campaign, they raided and marched with their guardian Shammar Yahra‘ash, king of Saba and Thi Ridan and they marched towards al-Sirr and Thi Dhamad. And they raided and marched with their guardian Shammar Yahra‘ash, king of Saba and Thi Ridan from al-Sirr and Wadi Hareeb towards al-Qaryatayn."*

Today, we can see al-Qaryatayn (arayt-eem) in the governorate of Hajja, directorate of Kahlan A‘far, where Uzlat Qaydan and the village called al-Qaryatayn are located.

At the end of this chapter, it becomes clear to us that Raobeen Tribe had inhabited territories extending from the suburbs of Sanaa, Thimar, Hajjah, Taez and al-Dhali' and that they had settled near a sister tribe, that of Jadd (Khawlan Jadd) and that the branches of this tribe had been distributed over known places spreading over the various mikhlafs of ancient Yemen. This is a familiar settlement behavior, for we may find until this moment branches of Shammar Tribe, for example, in the Syrian Desert and near the Iraqi Najaf at the same time. In this wide geographic space, however, we cannot find any trace of Madaba that is claimed to have been mentioned in the Torah.

***Jursh of Yemen and its Surroundings***

The name of Jursh was mentioned in the Torah as the Jurshounis, people who belong to the sons of Levi (Luayy), the kohens. It is clear from describing the places and the names of the clans that there is no relationship between Jursh of Yemen and Jarash of Jordan, knowing that there is another Jursh southwest of Saudi Arabia near Saadah.[80] The texts of the Book of Numbers had

80 Jursh in Saudi Arabia is on the road to Saadah from the southwest.

recorded the name of the Jurshounis in the context of a story about Moses counting the Israelite clans and tribes. In the Book of Numbers, we read the following Hebrew text (3:17-19):

"בני-גרשון למשמחתם לבני ושמעי ובני קהת למשפחתם עמרם ויצהר חברן ועזיאל ובני מררי."

*"The sons of Garshon and their clans of the sons and Sumi'i and the sons of Qahat and their clans Yas-hur and I'zeel and the sons of Murar."*

The group of people known as the Jurshounis may have taken their name from the particular place, Jursh. Those people identify themselves as the sons of Levi (Luayy), i.e the Levis, the kohens of the sons of Israel, but do not say that they descend from a father called Jursh. This is quite important for distinction between being identified with a place or with a grandfather. It is also understood from these texts that the Jurshounis are blood relatives with the tribes of Lubna – Lubnah and Sumi'i in the Assyrian inscriptions, which is a Yemeni tribal union known of having established the temple of the god Almaqah. In addition to them, there is Yas-hur, Qahat and I'zeel (al-U'zza), as well as the sons of Murar (kings of Kinda Tribe). Naturally, they had appropriated their own habitations like the other tribal branches. As Jordanian Jarash has nothing to do with these clans and tribes, and has nothing that tells of the existence of the aforementioned places, it is difficult to imagine that the story has anything to do with the ancient Palestinian history. The place to which these people are related is Jursh that still has the same name and is

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The archeological explorations have lately revealed important antiquities that confirm its historical status. There is a place by the name of al-Jarshah in the directorate of Mayfa'at A'ns in the eastern part of the governorate of Thimar, which is an archeological site from the Himyari era that is still inhabited until today and is distinguished by its rural nature.

located in the governorate of Lahaj in a large territory historically known as al-Nu‘mani (Nu‘man in the Torah). The most important place in this governorate is Mount al-Shibr – Shibreem, Bayt Harad (Harad in the Torah). The most important place in al-Nu‘mani is Jursh. There is another Jursh in the directorate of Mayfa‘at A‘ns, in the eastern section of the directorate of Thimar. This directorate is a plain region with the exception of two mountainous Uzlats, namely Ya‘ar (as in the Torah) and Wadi Zubayd, as well as parts of the two Uzalts of Isbeel and Jabal al-Dar (Aldar in the Torah), where rugged mountainous regions are prevalent, like Jabal al-Lassi, which was pronounced at al-Hamadani's time as Lass (lassan) in Uzlat al-Athlaa, which is still an active volcanic mountain. (After the name of Jabal Isbeel, in Uzlat Isbeel, the city of Ishbeelyah (Sevilla) in Andalusia was named by the fighters of Himyari origin.) And then there is Jabal Mathwah in Uzlat Jabal Zubayd. The directorate is connected to the center of the governorate by a paved road that passes through its center and extends to the governorate of al-Baydaa. Another paved road branches out of it through a region that still has a parallel wording to the same name, al-Jarshah. It passes to the governorate of al-Hada' (Hada in the Torah). We know from history that Bani al-Murar were the kings of Kinda tribe, to which the Yemeni pre-Islamic poet Imru-l-Qays belonged. As for Sumi‘, it is the tribe itself – a union of Yemeni tribes mentioned in Musnad inscriptions. Having its own temples, it was known with a strict religious attitude. In the inscription *RES.4176*, where the first kind of the ancient pilgrimage rituals in Maareb for the Sabai god al-Maqah in the temple of Awam, the sanctuary of Balqis, the name of Sumi‘i Tribe appears in this version. This pilgrimage ritual was performed in a specific month of the year Tha Abhi, and continues for over nine days, during which the pilgrims perform their rituals, men, women and

children together. In this inscription, the god addresses Sumi‘i Tribe as follows: “Ta’leb Riyam Yahrakhm, the compassionate the merciful, had ordered Sumi‘i not to forget pilgrimage to the temple of the god al-Maqah in Maarab in the month of Abhi in the same holy days when they make pilgrimage to him [i.e. the god Ta’leb].” The Assyrians had clashed with Sumi‘i tribe many times in nine continuous campaigns in Yemen. The inscription mentions its name, Sumi‘i, in the same wording. As Torah’s Jursh is related with its neighboring tribes and places, I shall stop at some of them. in this section of the chapter, I wish to explain the relationship of this text with that of Joshua, where he records names of other places which some tribes had inhabited, including a place called Seen – Sen. The name of Seen is written as Sen, which is quite confusing as it leads to creating a place that does not exist in Palestine, whereas it should be written with the letter “dh’.[81] Here, I whish to draw the reader’s attention to an important matter related to the Sananite Hebrew, the official language in Israel, the Jews of Yemeni origin use it together with Arabic by adding the Arabic letters, like “ثاء”, “جيم”, “طاء”, “ظاء”, “ضاد”, “ذال`” and “غين” . They also add to their writing a dot over and below the letter.

This is how the Hebrew text describes the tribe’s habitations:

"מדבר צן גנבה מ קצה תימן ויהיה להם גבול נגב"

This phrase is traditionally translated this way: “From the wilderness of Seen to al-Naqab from the side of Timan.”

What does the Jewish and the Christian faithful, even

81 Some ancient Yemeni dialects lack the letter “dh”. The Thamoudi alphabet, e.g., which is the ancient Arabic itself, lacks this letter.

the ordinary reader understand from this verse in the holy text? Is there another Seen in Palestine that can be reached from the Naqab (Negeve) desert? The problem in this translation is in its perversion and playing with the direct and clear-cut sense, as well as in having to add some words from outside the text. It also does not comprehend the meaning of the expression "גבול נגב" and having to change the sequence of the text. It had placed the imagined "נגב" (Naqab -Negev) before "תימן". They also translated "מדבר" to wilderness, because "דבר" in Hebrew means wilderness, except that they did not notice the letter "מ" that makes what they had thought to be a description a specific place, namely Wadi Dubur. All this makes the translated text a source of the present geographic chaos. What this text says is simply the following:

*"From Wadi Dubur, Dheen and Janba and from its far end Temen, it is for them before the Najab."*

These are known places that the narrator of the text had wished to record to show the presence of roads and routes leading to the tribe's habitations from many sides. Janba and A'yn Rijl – Rijlah are water springs and valleys near Yemeni Jursh. We had previously defined the location of Mount Dheen to the north of Sanaa, which is one of the blessed mountains and it is said that Prophet Muhammad had recommended that the mosque of Sanaa be built in this place. It is also said, in this context, that he had dispatched messengers to the Yemenis to teach them the principles of Islam. Among thoses was Wabar ibn Yuhans al-Khaza'i whom he had ordered to build a mosque in a specific place, namely Mount Dheen and more specifically, inside an orchard facing the rock in the heart of what is known as the archeological Ghimdan Palace. Thus we can reach Yemen's Quds if we move from Wadi Dubur in the directorate of Sinhan

east of Sanaa and then we move northward towards the holy Mountain Dheen, where Wadi al-Teem (al-Temen) appears at the far end in the governorate of al-Dhali‘. This is exactly the road that leads to Taez. Temen, with the dialectical “n”, was mentioned by the poet al-Hakam al-Hadhari (Yaqoot 2:79):

*You cry as anxiety stimulates your eye tears*

*At Na‘f* ***Temen*** *in summer and in spring*

Now the question is: does Jordan’s Jarash lead to al-Naqab (Negev)? Is there a mountain in the vicinity called Dheen or Seen?

# Chapter Five

***Careful Examinations in describing al-Yeriden***

Let us now make other examinations of the Torah's description of River ha-Yeriden for the purpose of revealing the nature of the orientalist playing in our history that, unfortunately, was not narrated by us, but continuously by the others. An approach of the names of the places that had been inhabited by the Israelite tribe Gad (i.e. the tribe of Khawlan Jadd) reveals to us an important reality to the effect that these places had extended from east of Sanaa until Aden, Hadhramawt and al-Jawf of Yemen, i.e. east and west of Wadi Mour, but not Palestine. As this tribe, according to the Torah, had received the territory of its settlement from Prophet Moses, it means that it had settled a long time ago at the time of Joshua (Yehusha‘ bin Noon) in ha-Yeriden. This is an extremely important matter, because it confirms the events as mentioned in the text about the style of residence and the habits of settlement, which is a style related to the beginning of the movement of the bedouin tribes from the none-organic world (the desert) and their inclination to settle in an organic world, i.e. in new fertile lands, the charming and affluent mountains and valleys. The olive oil mills and the network of apiaries that had developed the famous honey industry in Yemen was a source of pride for the pre-Islamic Arabs and Yemenis. Until today, they are a live witness for that style of settlement. The Hebrew text narrates (Joshua 13:24) that Gad Tribe had received from

Prophet Moses a territory for its settlement together with its descendents extending over a large and well-known geographic region. We shall elaborate on all this in the context of analyzing the text:

ויתן משה למטה גד לבני גד למשפחתם ויהי להם הגבול יעזר וכל-ערי
הגלעד וחצי ארץ בני עמון עד-ערוער אשר על-פני רבה ומחשבון עד-רמת
המצפה ובטנים וממחנים עד-גבול לדבר ובעמק בית הרם ובית נמרה וסכות
וצפון יתר ממלכות סיחון מלך חשבון הירדן וגבל עד- קצה ים- כנרת עבר הירדן
מזרחה זאת נחלת בני-גד למשפחתם הערים וחצריהם

*"And Moses had given land to the sons of Jad (Gad) and to the clans of the sons of Jad (Gad). So theirs was Qabel of Ya'zur and all the habitations of Gila'd and half of the land of A'moun until A'ra'r that is opposite to Rabbah, and from Hashbon to Rammah of Safa and then the Batnat, and from Manaeem near Qabel Wadi Dubur and in Jawf and in Bayt Haram and Bayt Namrah and Sukout and Safon and Yetar. And from the large stream up to the far end of Kinrot and Yam across ha-Yeriden east of their depression and seclusions sons of Gad and their clans eastward."*

Names of places mentioned here do not refer at all to the geography of Palestine or that of Jordan. There is no place or a single mountain the existence of which can be imagined to be in the West Bank [of River Jordan] or the name of which is similar to the names mentioned above. We have been very careful in ascertaining the names of places in order to be in line with the Hebrew wordings. We were also careful in the text in being as close as possible to the culture of the ancient people who used to be appropriated lands for religious reasons. This, we believe,

is the meaning of the traditional expression in the texts of the Torah (ויתן משה למטה) , which we believe to mean: *Moses had granted land as a fief to the tribe*. There is certainly a deeper religious indication in the word "ויתן" (give land as a fief) than simple giving. In the history of Islam, there are cases like that when Prophet Muhammad had given land as a fief to the tribal sheikhs, for this is a deep-rooted cultural tradition when people move from the Bedouin world to urban settlement and with the appearance of tribal homelands. In other words, giving land as a fief does not indicate simple giving as much as it refers to a kind of religious congruence for people to have defined and recognized homelands.

The list below is the epitome of the text with examples of the names of places:

Al-A‘zuz

U‘ru‘r

Ramah

al-Masfah

Al-Batnah – al-Batnat

Al-Mihan Al-Dubrah

Yam

We shall commence our search for the habitations of the Israelite tribe Jad (Gad) from the name of Ya‘zur (al-U‘zar) in this list, which is the tribe that is meant, as we have seen, to be the tribe of Khawlan Jad.

We have seen that the tribe of Reuben had inhabited places adjacent to Taez, Sanaa and Hajjah, which means that some of the branches of the tribe Jad (Gad), according to the Torah's description, had settled in the neighborhood, whether in Sanaa itself or in the region of al-Jawf next to it. In the meanwhile, other branches and clans had settled in the neighboring territories down to Taez. Let us look, therefore, for its places starting from this governorate. The village of Ya'zur (al-U'zar) - the "y" at the beginning of the name is a definite article - is located within a beautiful mountainous uzla called al-Dha'h, which is administratively part of the directorate of al-Salu in the southeastern part of the governorate of Taez. It is bordered from the north and the east by the directorate of Khadeer (as in the Torah), from the south by the directorates of al-Mawaset and Hifan (Hif in the Torah) and from the west by the directorate of al-Mawaset. Its area is approximately 89.3 Km's$^2$. It has a population of 49,558 people. This means that the tribe had settled in Taez that is known to be one of the most ancient of the Yemeni towns. In its neighborhood is the governorate of al-Baydaa up to the region of al-Jawf. As for Sakkout, it is an ancient place in the Hawamrah Uzlah that is part of the directorate of Mawah in Taez, i.e. in the same place. In order to enable the reader to follow the distribution of the tribe's branches, we must notice that some of the names of the habitations of this tribe are repeatedly mentioned in this text once again, which we have already noted. It seems that the narrator of the text, in the frame of the ancient tradition of geographic description, was keen on clarifying and defining the roads and tracks that lead to the habitations of the tribe of Jad (Gad) from al-Jawf up to Taez (see the map). He, therefore, had described it by defining the directions of the roads that lead to the habitations of other groups, like Hashbo (al-Hawasheb). This is quite understandable for a narrator with

a bedouin culture. Until today, if you ask a bedouin about the habitation of his tribe, he will do the same by describing the road to it through the habitations of others. Important in this text is its reference to the existence of the tribe's habitation in A'mq that we find within the geography of Yafi' region in the governorate of Abyan, which is a geographic extension of the governorates of al-Dhali'and Taez – now it is a governorate in the administrative organization of South Yemen. This means that it is in the same place where we had found Ya'zuz and Sakkout. Yafi' is located northeast of Aden between the two longitudinal lines 45-46 degrees and the two horizontal lines 13-14 degrees. It is bordered from the south by the Red Sea coast, from the north by al-Baydaa Governorate, from the east by the directorate of Loder (Mukayras) and from the west by al-Dhali' and the directorate of Halmeen (as in the Torah). In its geographic location, it represents the western side of Abyan Governorate and the northeastern side of the Lahaj governorate. In this context, we must notice that the name of Yafi' is that of the region as well as the tribe. It was known in the Musnad inscriptions by the name of Dahsam or Dahas and also by the name of Saru Himyar. Perhaps the oldest mention of it had been in al-Nassr inscription *RES.3954*, as it was named Dahsam when it became within the properties of the Osani Kingdom. It remained this way until the first centuries AD, when new historical names appeared, like Bani Ma'aher and Thu Khawlan. It seems that it had formed part of a larger kingdom that included Yafi', the territories of al-Baydhaa and Radaa', which used to be named after their kings, Thu Ma'aher, Thu Khawlan and Radman. If we continue searching in this geographic space for the rest of the habitations, we shall find that some of them are located in Thimar, Sanaa and al-Jawf. According to this description, A'mq is in a neighboring region from the north of Lahaj and Taez. Therefore, this tribe

had its habitations in this part of Yemen, ascending towards al-Jawf. In the road to these governorates, a series of habitations are located, like Bayt Namrah and Bayt Harem (Haram). What is the link between the ancient Yemeni-Arabic word *al-Jawf* and the Hebrew-Arabic *A'mq*? What is the linguist relationship it has with the Arabic word *wadi* (valley)?

The word *jawf* in Arabic means the deep valley with copious water. With this meaning, the places described by Joshua in *A'mq*, i.e. in Wadi *A'mq*, are definite places where the tribe had settled and in which numerous streams of water flow or run into. This is *jawf*. The two words, as noticed, have the same meaning. This, we believe, is the direct meaning of the Hebrew word in this text: "and in *A'mq*, i.e. in al-Jawaf – Bayt Haram and Bayt Namrah. The same word had been given to another place in north of Lahaj. This place is not the intended one even though its name is like that in the Torah, because the description in the text refers to the existence of other places inside it, which makes us believe that the region of al-Jawf had been intended, where the mentioned places in their Torah's names are located close to each other. Do the discovered Musnad inscriptions agree with Joshua's text? Let us scrutinize the question. The name of the city of Haram had been mentioned in some Musnad inscriptions, including one that dates back to the seventh century BC as "*h j r n/h r m m*", i.e. "hajar city haram." This is the first appearance of the name "*h-r-m*", where al-Makreb Karb al-Watar ibn Thimar Ali, Makreb of Saba. The name *haram* is exactly in its Torah's version, confirming that he had granted the king of Haram the ownership of the water of Thu Qana'an, which is copious water in the region of al-Jawf that was part of the property of the king of Nashan City, called al-Sawdaa today. Therefore, the Hebrew word *kana'n* should refer us to

Qana‘an, which, in our opinion, is the more precise version for the name *Kana‘n* in some of the Torah’s texts. Reading the inscription carefully, we notice that King Karb justifies this by saying that the king of Haram had mutinied against the hegemony of the king of Saba and that he had rewarded his mutiny by granting him this water. Some archeologists ascribe the disappearance of the name of Haram in the records in the following centuries to the change in the routes of commerce passing through Wadi al-Jawf from the land to the sea. From an ancient cultural perspective, according to archeologists, what may distinguish Haram, among other strategic merits, is that, contrary to the kingdoms in al-Jawf, it was speaking in a Sabai dialect that had its different specialty from the Ma‘eeni dialect, especially in the preposition "من". The city of Haram today[82]is a round archeological hill, but the ancient city is still buried in the sand as it has not been subject to exploration works to define the remains of its walls and architectural establishments. Here, I must draw the reader’s attention to the confusion on behalf of the translators of the Hebrew text with regard to the word “*ben*” in some texts, for they had thought it to mean “son”, whereas it means “from”. Haram that had disappeared from the stage of history, however, still reminds us of its glory. Behind those walls, modern clay buildings have been built and inhabited by the clan of Ali, whose name was given to the city so that it is called today Khirbat Aal Ali. At 3 Km’s from this city, there is a large temple for the god “Matbenteen”,[83] one of the city’s gods. The wording of the god’s name, Matben-Teen, should refer us

82 The National Information Center.

83 Most probably the name of this god dates back to the time when the stars were worshipped. His name refers to the Milky Way (*Darb al-Tabbanah, Tibn*), the name that the Yemeni tribes had left at a place called Tibn that had been mentioned by the Torah. What supports this is that his temple looks like the temple of Banat A‘ad (like Banat Na‘sh).

to a more general concept related to the development of the wording of the name of another god, Fals-Teen. If the name of the god Tibn (meaning son) has to do with the description of his function (teen in Hebrew gives the meaning of the gifted son - gifted by the giving lord), then he is the god of donation, which confirms that the name Falasteen (Palestine) is originally linked with worshipping the god Falas-teen, i.e. the god Falas the gifted donator. It is interesting that the god Falas in his worshipping rituals as followed by the tribe of Tayy is the god of the umbilicus. This is precisely the philosophical conception of worshipping the son of the the god in Christianity. He is a god and a son at the same time. The older origin of this interesting concept is connected to the miraculous infant who can speak in his cradle. This infant is Esa ibn Maryam (Jesus Christ). What is interesting is that when we enter the temple of the god Matben-Teen, we find some stony pillars engraved with drawings that look like the drawings of Banat A'ad in al-Sawdaa. This is something that confirms, from an archeological perspective, that the temple is very ancient. There is also in these ancient ruins remains of the city of Kamanhu, known today as Khirbat Kamanat. The city of Kamanat is located to the west of the city of al-Hazm at 9 Km's to the south of Wadi Mithab. The oldest mention of this city dates back to the 7th century BC. It is one of the cities mentioned in al-Nassr inscription *RES.3945.* In this inscription, it is mentioned that Karb Watar ibn Thimar Ali Makreb of Saba had granted the king of Kamanhu Nabt Ali the agricultural steps and lands that had been the property of the king of Nashan - al-Sawdaa today - as a reward for his mutiny against the Sabai hegemony.

No doubt that the existence of an inscription from the 7th century BC mentioning the name of Haram in al-Jawf region will seem identical with Joshua's phrase, "in *A'mq*: Haram".

That is because the inscription is older than the presumed date of writing the Torah. The region of al-Jawf (*A'mq* – A'meeq) where the habitations of the Israelite tribe had spread through is located northwest of Yemen. It is about 170 Km's away from Sanaa and consists of 12 directorates, of which al-Hazm is the most important. It is the center of the governorate and its topographic relief is distributed among mountains, plateaus, wide plains, fertile agricultural valleys and deserts (see the map). In this harmonious geographic space, Nimra – Nimran is there (adjacent to it is the mountainous Uzlat Dayan – notice the Hebrew wording of the name Dayan in the dialect of Sanaa today.) They are part of the directorate of Bani Matar of the governorate of Sanaa.

***The administrative division of Nati' Directorate of al-Baydaa Governorate where Rimah and Misfa are located***

The clan of Nimran is one of the most important tribes that had inhabited Mikhalf al-O'ud - the region of al-O'ud today. Al-O'ud is an old mikhlaf between the governorates of Ibb and al-Dhali', which includes a large series of mountains. In this geographic space, the plateaus of al-Safa (ha-Misfa) are located.

Misfa still keeps its ancient name in the same location, which is quite surprising and unprecedented. Following are the evidences: an important inscription of many that had been discovered in the temple of Ma'bad (Ma'badan – al-A'bdan) in Mount al-Domar, describes the high mountain Rimah as one of the minor states of al-Qatabaniyya State, in which there is a tribe that belongs to the god A'mm, the official god of the state of Qataban. Rimah is approximately 200 Km's away from Sanaa and is administratively divided into six directorates. The city of al-Jubayn is the real center of the governorate. Rimah is distinguished by having a rugged nature, high mountains

and charming beauty. This, we believe, is the reason behind its name, Rimah, meaning lofty. It is interesting that its name has been shared by a large number of places in Yemen, like Rimat al-Manakhi in al-A‘ddayn; al-Manakhi and al-A‘ddayn are recorded in the Torah in the same wording: Rimah, Manakh, al-A‘ddayn. There is also Rimat Hameed in Sanhan and Rimat Bani Qayse (another mountain) mentioned by the historians as the Great Ramah, or Rimat al-Ashabet, after the tribe of al-Ashabet, kings of the mikhlaf. What had been told about it in the old books of *khabar* shows its importance and beauty, for the writers had detailed its beauty, abundance of its water, fertility of its soil and the quality of its produce. Until today, we still can see the same name in its Hebrew version, Misfah[84] in the directorate of Nati’ within Uzlat Aal Sudan, where a place with the same name exists.

The village of Rimah, which is named after the mountain, is located in the directorate of Nati‘, which is one of the small directorates in the governorate of al-Baydaa that is adjacent to Sanaa and Thimar – see the map. Since Joshua makes Misfah

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84 The Hebrew word *ramma* (רמה) means a white plateau. This, in our opinion, is meant by the name, because the charming Rimah, with its high mountains and fabulous valleys deserves this name. The expression *misfah*, which belongs to the Arabic word *safa* (صفا) , is used to describe the black rocky stones. In the past, the early Arab tribes, as well as the pre-Islamic poets, had given this description to the extinguished black volcanic stones (حجارة صفا) , while the hot or flaming volcanic stones where called *harrah* (حرّة) . The hotter volcanic stones were called *labah* (لابة) , from which the English word *lava* was taken. The name *misfa – safa* is a description of rocky places with a volcanic nature. The existence of a place called Ramma ha-Misfah (Safa Plateaus) proves that the environment described by the Torah is not a Palestinian one. As Misfah in the Torah’s texts indicates a specific place in the list of the habitations of Jadd (Gad) Tribe, we shall deal with it in the context of explaining the archaic definite article, namely the prefix “m” that was used in the ancient Yemeni dialects, where the text of the Torah had appeared. Judaism, therefore, had appeared in Yemen, not in Canada or Australia,

near Batoneem and Yahr and Yam in Sanaa, as shown in the above text, i.e. in the same place today in modern Yemen, its reloationship with Palestine is but an invention of history also, not only of geography. Al-Batnah – Batoneem is today in the governorate of Taez and carries the same ancient name. Al-Batnah, which had been named after the valley, is one of the villages of al-Suwa (Sou in the Torah), capital of al-Ma'afer. It is located to the west of Barak al-Ghimad (Bark in the Torah) and the fortress of al-Qadam (Qadmot in the Torah). It is said that it was given this name because it is located on a plateau in the valley and it is surrounded by a few villages the inhabitants of which belong to Bani Tameem. All these villages belong to al-Batnah Village, being the largest and oldest – and because its inhabitants consider themselves a historical extension of a village that was known for being the village of the sheikhs (chiefs) of Bani Tameem. Al-Ma'afer is the old expression meaning the largest region in Yemen. It includes a larger area than that of the governorate of Taez, south of Sanaa from where Al-Ma'afer is 256 Km's away. In this context, the two names, Yam and Kanrot, had been made equivalent to al-Kanarat Sea and had been imagined as one place located in Palestine under the latter name. This is quite astonishing, because thinking that al-Yeriden is Jordan does not fit with the existence of a sea in its neighborhood called al-Kanarat. As Palestine does not know of such a sea in its geography, this means that, because of its obscurity and and charm had known a sea to the west of River Jordan, but had disappeared leaving no trace behind it except its name in the Torah. In fact, Yam, which is translated into sea wherever found in the Torah, is the source of this confusion, because there is no sea or place to the west called Yam. In Arabic, the word "yam" means sea, but it is impossible to find a sea near River Jordan. On the contrary, we can find Yam (ים)

in Sanaa, which is a historical high mountain that still keeps its name. Thus, we are on Joshua's path in the vicinity of of Sanaa, where the tribe's habitations are located. In the previous pages, we had talked about Mount Yam. We are left with repeating the emphasis that the water of Mount Yam and its valley form the most important tributaries of Wadi Mour. The water of this valley flows up to Najran passing through a series of places and valleys and mixing with the water of Kitaf Stream. This Kitaf (كتف - כתף). , which is one of the valleys of the governorate of Saada, still carries the same name. This description is totally in line with that of Joshua. It is illogical, of course, to ignore a description of this kind where the name of Wadi Kitaf is mentioned in two texts for Joshua and al-Hamadani in the same geographic space. As the text refers to Mount Yam in the far end of the geographic space, it is certain that it refers to its existence near Sanaa, for a man who makes his description starting in Saada. The name of this mountain appears many times in Musnad inscriptions. In an inscription for King Shammar Yahra'sh, the king records the news of his forces' attack against the tribe of Asad, Tanoukh's land and Saflan, the region of al-Safal (Safal "שפל" in the Torah), as well as against Yam Thi Aban. Perhaps the importance of this unique place lies in the existence of a water stream mentioned by the Torah, called Faraah.

Horrible orientalist legends have been created around the name of Faraah claiming that the Iraqi River al-Furat (Euphrates) was meant and that David had crossed that river. This Faraah, as said above, is a stream of water flowing under Mount Yam in the directorate of Naham of Uzlat al-Hanshat that, administratively, belongs to Sanaa. In a parallel description that we had used before to distinguish Mount Yam from the country of Yam, al-Hamadani explains the geography of Yam country

that is adjacent to Hamadan (p. 266): “Yam is in Najran[85]half of which is with Hamadan.” This precise description of the borders of the country of Yam is quite interesting; for it explains Joshua’s phrase “ עמון חצי ארץ בני” (half of the land of A‘moun).

We notice the similarity in al-Hamadani’s description and that of Joshua in this approach:

| Joshua | Al-Hamadani |
|---|---|
| half of the land of A‘moun | half of which [the land] is with Hamadan |
| Bani A‘moun | Their land |

In this context, the word “חצי” in the Hebrew text is confusing, for it may mean middle or half, etc., like middle of the land of Bani A‘moun. It may also mean half of the land of Bani A‘moun, or it may mean “*hissah*” – portion of the tribe. In any case, a better understanding of it will be possible by reading al-Hamadani’s description. We shall also see that the narrator of the text here means by “*Hassi*” (חצי) the name of a coastal valley near the habitations of Bani A‘moun and that he does not mean any of the previous meanings. We had already referred to this place near Haram (al-Hamadani 150-152):

> *“The islands of East Yemen are in the same status as Tihamah in the west … and Beehan. It is watered by Balad Ridman and Hassi … and then there is the water spring of East Yemen, which is the greatest valley in the east like Mour … and Mikhlaf Thi Jurrah and Yekli and Jahran and Harran in Sawad Timar.”*

85 The name of Najran was mentioned in an inscription (*Jam 579*), the translation of which is the following: “Their princes came back to al-Sharh Yahdhub, king of Saba and Ridan, carrying the loots and the captives as well as Dhibaa Ba‘l Thu Sahrat and the land of Himyar and Najran.

Hassi[86] is considered an archeological site in the Yemeni coast. Nothing of its landmarks has remained today except the inscriptions. The archeologists have found there statues and writings that refer to an ancient temple. In addition to all this, it was considered the real capital of al-Saru, but had disappeared. On its ruins, a new city had arisen, namely al-Baydaa. Therefore, the Hebrew phrase, "חצי וארץ בני עמון" can be understood as meaning, "Hassi and the land of Bani A'moun. It is noticed that the territories of the governorate of al-Baydaa are part of what had been called in the past the territories of Dahsam, which are the high territories of Tibn, as mentioned in the al-Nassr Inscription *RES.3945*, of the seventh century BC. At the onset of the first century AD, a number of strong tribes anciently called Baydaa Hassi started to appear in the territories that we call today the governorate of al-Baydaa. They used to be within the properties of Saru Mith-haj, where the city of Hassi came to officially stand for the capital. There are in the governorate of al-Baydaa the natural mineral and sulfuric springs that are attended by people for healthy bathing. They include the spring of the Throne of Balqis, Queen of Saba, or Makeeda. The spring in the directorate of Rada' is visited by foreign tourists for medication. Al-Baydaa is composed of a number of directorates the most important of which is al-Sawma'a. Al-Saru is also called Hassi al-Saru. Mihnaeem remains of the series of places of this list. Yahar - Mihnaeem means camps (notice the archaic definite article "m".) The Hebrew three-letter root is Hanu, meaning to settle, to camp. There is a series of places well-known by the ancient Arabs mentioned by the Torah, like Hanu Qarqar,

86 Ammeeda Muhammad Sha'lan, assistant professor of the Arabian ruins and languages, University of Sanaa, *King Saud University Journal*, Vol. 17, pp. 429-439, Riyadh, 2005. In Musnad inscriptions, it became known that some Yemeni women were called Hassi – Hassi Nu'm, after the goddess Nu'm.

which is the place of the famous battle in the torah between the Assyrians and the Egyptians. The Torah records this place in connection with David's wars (Samuel II 17: 24 ):

"ודוד בא מחנימה ואבשלם עבר את ה ירדן"

*"And David returned to the camps and he crossed Abshalem the Yeriden."*

We also notice that the Hebrew name Mihnaeem has to do with the name of *henna*, or *hennat* in the plural sense. As the translators of the text did not find an equivalent word for it, although they had used the same root in talking about David's camp, they left the name without an indicative equivalent. In Kamal Salibi's book, *Al-Tawrah Ja-at min Jazeerat al-A'rab (The Torah had Come from Arabia)*, the name was translated into the Arabic word *Mua'skar* (camp), which is a modern expression that does not belong to the ancient wordings of the text, especially for the bedouin fighting groups who do not know except the word "الحنو" , that means settlement and erection of their tents in the place, like in the place called Hanu Qaraqer, which is a famous Arabian place in the traditional books of *khabar* (see the battle of Qarqar in the Torah.) In addition to the word Mihnaeem, the Torah's texts use the expression "בהאמחנה", not in reference to a camp, but in reference to Mount al-Mihan (the Arabic plural of Mihneem), northwest of Sanaa. This mountain, in its ancient name and description, is still there to the left-hand side of Mount al-Heem. It was previously called Mount A'shar. The most important landmark in this mountain is a cliff cut in the rocks and was used as a cemetery. It is about 5 meter long, 6.32 meters wide and 4 meters high. It has an entrance that is 2.23 meters high and 2 meters wide with a small room, in addition to a niche in the wall like a prayers one. In the middle of the cliff there is

a water basin that may have been used in funeral rituals. Mount al-Mihan is located within the geography of Wadi Dhahar (Sahar in the Torah), northwest of Sanaa, 14 Km's away. It is a large valley that has been known since the pre-Nativity ages. The scribbles on its rocks are witness to that. From the archeological data, it is clear that this valley had witnessed human settlement in the pre-historic ages; the first mention of it had been in the inscriptions of the 7th century BC (*RES. 3945* Inscription). It seems that the reputation of this valley and the beauty of its mountains, especially Mount al-Mihan – Mihnaeem, had given it special merits that had encouraged its inhabitants throughout history to excel in architectural arts that had been described by the historians and the travelers as the best God's lands in its fresh water, refreshing air and fertile soil. What is known as Dar al-Hajar (the Stony House), a high and beautiful structure in the front of the valley, is also there. Some of the inhabitants claim that Dar al-Hajar had been so-named after the rock over which the house was built. As for Yahar (יהר), it is found in this ancient name in the governorate of Lahaj, directorate of Yahar, in Uzlat Yahar to the southeast of Sanaa. It is bordered from the east by Wadi al-Ajbar, from the south by al-Sawad (called by al-Hamadani as Naqeel al-Soud). It seems that the name of the Uzlah (seclusion) is after the name of Wadi Yahar in the adjacent Yafi' that is surrounded by high mountains. On the peaks of these mountains, there are remains of ruins, the archeologists and the historians think that in the past they were holy mountains, where temples for the gods of the ancient Yemenis had been built. Among this series of holy mountains, streams the water of Wadi Yahar. From this sequence in the habitations of the the tribe of Jad (Gad),[87] we are certain that it had settled in the geographic

87 In the inscription of Dadan, the archeologists had read the following phrase: "The cave of Kibral ibn Mata' Aal Malek Dadan and Ni'm Nar Jad".

space east of Sanaa, Lahaj, Yafi' and Yemeni al-Jawf, but not in Palestine.

The scientists did not agree on the meaning of Jad in this text. Biston had suggested that "Nar Jad" is meant to be the god of luck. We shall satisfy ourselves by saying that Jad (as a name of a place and as "jadah", meaning road) refers to the far past. Jad (grandfather) also means the old.